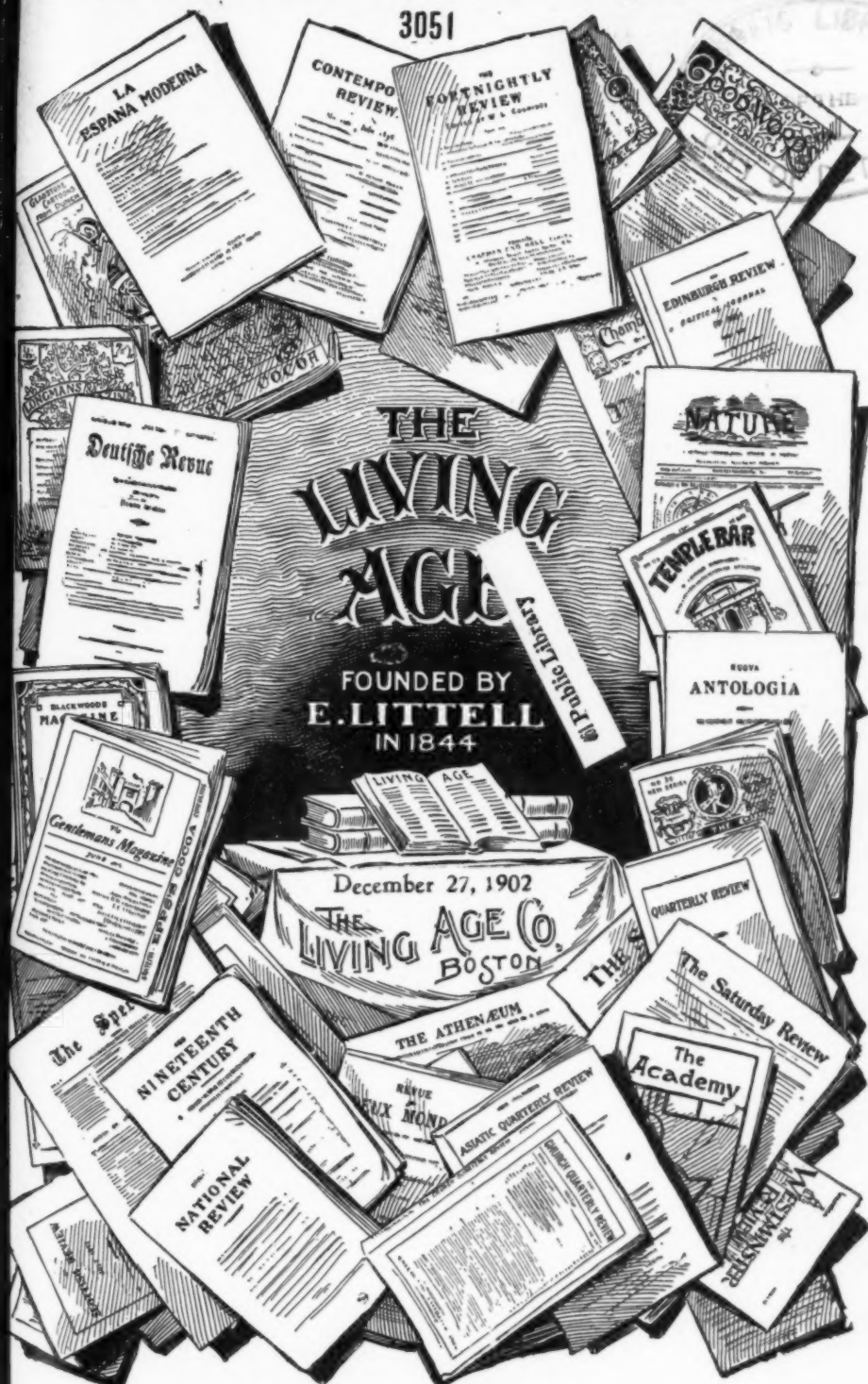


PHILIP JAMES BAILEY. By Edmund Gosse.

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Seventh Series }
Volume XVII. }

No. 3051—December 27, 1902.

{ From Beginning
Vol. CCXXXV. }

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FROM BEGINNING
Vol. CCXXXV.

—♦—
PHILIP JAMES BAILEY.

At the opening of the present year there were still alive amongst us two men who survived as representatives of what poetry was in these islands before the commencement of the Victorian era. Both have left us—Mr. Aubrey de Vere, having reached his eighty-ninth year, passed away on the 20th of January; Mr. Philip James Bailey, in his eighty-seventh, on the 7th of September. So, as we sit quietly and watch, we see history unrolling, since, in the chronicle of our literature, the closure of a great and complicated system of poetic activity is, in a sense, defined by the deaths of these venerable men. Moreover—and this is curious—in each of these survivors we had, living before us, types—not quite of the first order, indeed, but yet vivid types—of the two main divisions of the English poetry of the first half of the nineteenth century. That, namely, which was devoted to a reasonable grace, and that which was uplifted on a mystical enthusiasm. So that a sermon on the verse of that time might well take as its text the opposed and yet related names of De Vere and Bailey.

Nothing so extensive is to be attempted here. But before endeavoring to define the character of the talent of the younger of these veterans, and to note the place of *Festus* in the history

of letters, we may linger a moment on what resemblance there was between the two aged men, so intensely opposed in their general disposition of mind and their walk in the world. They had in common an exquisite personal dignity, Mr. de Vere moving both in Ireland and in London in the genial companionship of like-minded friends, Mr. Bailey stationary in his cloister or hermitage at Nottingham. They had in common the happy fate which preserved to each in extreme old age all the faculties of the mind, the sweetest cheerfulness, the most ardent hopefulness, an optimism that nothing could assail and that disease itself avoided. Each, above all, to a very remarkable degree, preserved to the last his religious devotion to that art to which his life had been dedicated, each to the very end was full of a passionate love of verse. Song-intoxicated men they were, both of them; retaining their delight in poetry far beyond the common limits of an exhilaration in any mental matter.

When this has been said, it is the difference far more than the resemblance between them which must strike the memory. Of the imaginative opposition which the author of *Festus* offered to the entire school of which Mr. de Vere was a secondary ornament,

more will be said later. But the physical opposition was immense, between the slowness of figure and flexible elegance of the Irish poet, with his mundane mobility, and the stateliness of Mr. Bailey. Mr. de Vere never seemed to be an old man, but a young man dried up; Mr. Bailey, of whose appearance my recollections go back at least five-and-twenty years, always during that time looked robustly aged, a sort of prophet or bard, with a cloud of voluminous white hair and curled silver beard. As the years went by, his head seemed merely to grow more handsome, almost absurdly, almost irritatingly so, like a picture of Connal, "first of mortal men," in some illustrated edition of Ossian. The extraordinary suspension of his gaze, his gentle, dazzling aspect of uninterrupted meditation combined with a curious downward arching of the lips, seen through the white rivers of his beard, gave a distinctly vatic impression. He had an attitude of arrested inspiration, as if waiting for the heavenly spark to fall again, as it had descended from 1836 to 1839, and as it seemed never inclined to descend again. But the beauty of Mr. Bailey's presence, which was so marked as to be an element that cannot be overlooked in a survey of what he was, had an imperfection in its very perfectness. It lacked fire. What the faces of Milton and Keats possessed, what we remember in the extraordinary features of Tennyson, this was just missing in Mr. Bailey, who, nevertheless, might have sat to any painter in Christendom as the type of a Poet.

I.

English literature in the reign of William IV. is a subject which has hitherto failed to attract a historian. It forms a small belt or streak of the most colorless, drawn across our va-

riegated intellectual chronicle. The romantic movement of the end of the preceding century had gradually faded into emotional apathy by 1830, and the years which England spent under the most undignified and inefficient of her monarchs were few indeed, but highly prosaic. Most of the mental energy of the time went out in a constitutional struggle which was necessary, but was not splendid. A man is hardly at his best when his own street-door has been slammed in his face, and he stands outside stamping his feet and pulling the bell. The decade which preceded the accession of Victoria was, in literature, a period of cold reason; the best that could be said of the popular authors was that they were sensible. A curious complacency marked the age, a self-sufficiency which expressed itself in extraordinary unemotional writing. To appreciate the heavy and verbose deadness of average English prose in the thirties, we must dip into the books then popular. No volume of the essay class was so much in vogue as the *Lacon* of the Rev. Mr. Colton, a work the aridity of which can only be comprehended by those who at this date have the courage to attack it. Mr. Colton, although he preached the loftiest morality, was a gambling parson, and shot himself, in 1832, in the forest of Fontainebleau. But that did not affect the popularity of his chain of dusty apophthegms.

The starvation of the higher faculties of the mind in the William IV. period was something which we fail to-day to realize. No wonder Carlyle thought, in 1835, that "Providence warns me to have done with literature," and in 1837, saw nothing for it but to "buy a rifle and a spade, and withdraw to the Transatlantic wilderness." In the letters of Tennyson we may easily read what it was that, after the failure of his enchanting volumes of 1830 and 1833, kept him silent in despair for ten

of his best years. This was the dead lull during which the moral storms of 1840-1850 were preparing to gather. It was the time when the Puseyite controversy was beginning, when *Tracts for the Times*, under an oppressive obloquy and miscomprehension, were making a struggle for religious warmth and air. A chilly light of reason applied to morals, that was what the subjects of William IV. desired to contemplate, and poetry itself was called upon to make a definite concession to the gospel of utility. Romance was at its lowest ebb, and even—

the ghost of Miltiades rose by night
And stood by the bed of the Benthamite.

Among poets who possessed the public ear at that time, the aged Wordsworth stood first, but the prestige of the laureate, Southey, who had been one of the most active and authoritative of reviewers, was, in many circles, paramount. Now Southey—as his most prominent disciple, Sir Henry Taylor, has proudly told us—"took no pleasure in poetic passion." By the time of which we are speaking, however, Southey and even Wordsworth had passed into the background of active life, but there had been no reaction against the quietism of their later days. That quietism had taken possession of the taste of the country, and had gradually ousted the only serious rival it had seemed to possess, the violence of Byron. It was at this time, in the full tide of Benthamism, that Henry Taylor attempted a poetical *coup d'état* which demands close attention from the student of our literary history.

In publishing his enormous drama of *Philip van Artevelde*, in 1834, Henry Taylor took occasion to issue a preface which is now far more interesting to read than his graceful verse. He thought the time had come to stamp out what he called "the mere luxuries

of poetry." He was greatly encouraged by the general taste of the public, which obviously was finding highly-colored literature unacceptable, and in a preface of singular boldness, not unadroit in its logic, Taylor presumed to dictate terms to the poets. He begged them, for the future, to walk the common earth and breathe the common air. He entreated them to believe that forcible expression, fervid feeling, and beautiful imagery are useless if employed in connection with thoughts that are not "sound." There was to be no health for us unless reason had full supremacy over imagination. Reflection must take the place of mere "feeling," thought the place of imagery. Passion, so this faithful disciple of Southey considered, was to be regarded as a direct danger and disadvantage.

Nor did the preface of 1834 confine itself to the encouragement of what was tame and good; it descended into the dust, and wrestled with lions that were wild and bad. It fought with Byron, as Christian fought with Apollon, conscious of the awful strength of its supernatural opponent. It fought, less strenuously, and with a touch of contempt, with "the brilliant Mr. Shelley," to whom it could afford to be condescending. It glanced round the arena without being able so much as to observe an antagonist who, to our eyes, fills the picture, and is alone sufficient to condemn all the *Philip van Artevelde* arguments and theories. This is Keats, of whom, so far as we can discover from this preface, Taylor had, in 1834, never even heard, or else despised so entirely that it did not occur to him to mention his name.

The Preface to *Philip van Artevelde* enjoyed a great success. Its assumptions were accepted by the reviews as poetic canon law. It was admitted without reserve that the function of poetry was "to infer and to instruct." The poets were warned to occupy them-

selves in future mainly with what was rational and plain. Henry Taylor had made a sweeping suggestion that the more enthusiastic species of verse was apt to encourage attention by fixing it on what is "puerile, pusillanimous, or wicked." There was a great searching of heart in families; the newspapers were immense. A large number of copies of *Childe Harold* and of *Manfred* were confiscated, and examples of Pollock's *Course of Time* (by many persons preferred to *Paradise Lost*, as of a purer orthodoxy) were substituted for them. Even the young Macaulay, who had suddenly become a power, joined the enemy, and declared that "perhaps no person can be a poet, or can ever enjoy poetry, without a certain unsoundness of mind." Ah, but, cries in effect the excellent Henry Taylor, we will so coerce and browbeat and depress the poets that they shall not think a thought or write a line that is not "sound," and the Benthamite himself (the stupendous original Jeremy had died, of course, in 1832) shall pluck, unhandily enough, at the lyre now consecrated to utility and decorum.

It was the old balance between "stasiy" and "ec-stasiy," and Henry Taylor was, to a certain extent, justified by the character of such contemporary works as might be held to belong to the ecstatic species. It did not seem a moment at which great subjects and a great style were prepared to commend themselves. The most prominent indulgers in "the mere luxury of poetry" were Heraud and Reade, whose efforts were calculated to bring instant ridicule upon imaginative writing by their hollow grandiloquence. There were the Byronisms of Croly, the once-famous author of that gorgeous romance, *Salathiel*, and there was the never-to-be-forgotten Robert Montgomery. All these poetasters merely emphasized and justified Henry Taylor's protest. In genuine poetry of a

highly imaginative cast there appeared, almost wholly unregarded, *Pauline* and *Paracelsus*, and in 1838 Miss Barrett produced, in defiance of the taste of the age, her irregular and impassioned *Seraphim*. None of these publications, however, disturbed in the least degree the supremacy of the school of good sense, or threatened that "equipoise of reason" which the disciples of Southey thought that they had fixed for ever. Poetry was to preserve its logical judgment; it was never to "let itself go." The cardinal importance of Mr. Bailey's *Festus* is that it was the earliest direct counterblast to this scheme of imaginative discipline, and that when it appeared in 1839 the walls built up by Henry Taylor's arrogant preface immediately began to crumble down.

II.

The extraordinary poem which thus recalled English literature to the ecstatic after a period of bondage to the static, and attracted the astonishment of the public by leading a successful revolt against baldness, against what a critic of the time called "the pride of natural barrenness," was the work of an extremely young man. Philip James Bailey was born in Nottingham on the 22nd of April, 1816. He was the son of a journalist of an excellent provincial type, a sturdy local politician, antiquary, and philanthropist, himself an amateur in verse, "an inveterate rhymers," we are told, and full of enthusiasm for new ideas as they revealed themselves to active-thinking persons in those repressed and stunted "thirties." The father of Philip James Bailey promptly acquiesced, like the father of Robert Browning, in the decision of his son to adopt "the vocation of a poet," and the boy seems to have been educated to that end, as others to become chartered accountants or solicitors. Nominally, indeed, the lat-

ter profession was selected for young Bailey, who, nevertheless, as early as 1835, is understood to have begun to plan his great poem. It is further related that in 1836—the young man was in his twentieth year—he began to write *Festus*, and in 1838 had finished the first draft of it.

So far as it appears, there was nothing but irresistible vocation and a selective use of the most sympathetic models which led Bailey back to what had so long and so completely been neglected in English poetry, the record of the subtler action of the mind. In the midst of a fashion for scrupulous common-sense, and "the equipoise of reason," here was a young man of twenty who, without any sort of impetus from without, and in defiance of current criticism, devoted himself to the employment of clothing philosophic speculation with almost reckless imagery. Henry Taylor had entreated the poets not to attempt to describe anything which cannot "be seen through the mere medium of our eyesight." But from the very outset the new bard was to deal wholly with impassioned spiritual life, exalted into a sphere unoccupied except by rapture and vision. You are to build, practically dictated the Preface of *Philip van Artevelde*, nothing but comfortable two-storied villas, with all the modern appliances. The architect of *Festus* comes, raising none but pinnacled archangelic chapels high in the unapparent. This was the note of the amazement with which *Festus* was received in 1839. It bore a message of good tidings to spiritual souls starving in a utilitarian desert. It lifted a palm-tree, it unsealed a well in the arid flats of common-sense. We cannot, in the light of all that has been written since, appreciate in the least degree what *Festus* was to its earliest readers, unless we bear this in mind. All the yearnings for the unlimited, all the suppressed

visions of infinity, all that groped in darkness after the excessive, and the impassioned, and the inconceivable, gathered in tumult and joy to welcome this new voice. James Montgomery wrote that, after reading *Festus*, he felt as though he had been eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

To realize what it was which hungry visionaries found in the new poem, it is necessary to turn back to what it was which was presented to them in 1839. The first edition of *Festus* is a work of remarkable interest. It is now very rare, and it may safely be said that there is no volume which justifies more completely the passion or mania of the book-collector. For sixty-three years *Festus* has not lacked readers, and edition after edition has steadily supplied a demand. But the *Festus* of 1901 is a very different affair from the volume of the same name of 1839. In the first place, it is very unlike it in size, since it contains about 40,000 verses, while the original edition has something less than 10,000. We shall presently have to describe the extraordinary manner in which Mr. Bailey, during sixty years, steadily added to the bulk of his poem. But the point to dwell on here is that the effect made upon his own generation was not made by the huge and very unwieldy book which one now buys as *Festus* in the shops, but by a poem which was already lengthy, yet perfectly within the bounds of easy reading. It seems essential, if we are to gauge that effect, to turn back to the first edition. This was a large octavo, with no name on the title-page, but with a symbolic back presenting a malignant snake flung downwards through the inane by the rays that dart from a triangle of light, a very proper preparation for the redundant and arcane invocations of the text within the covers.

The attack of the utilitarians had

been chiefly directed against the disciples of Byron, and the new poet evaded the censure of such critics by ignoring in the main the influence of that daemonic enchanter. It is specious to see the effect of *Manfred* upon *Festus*, but in point of fact the resemblance seems to result from a common study of *Faust*. Nor has the *Dr. Faustus* of Marlowe—although, since the publication of Lamb's *Specimens* in 1808, that majestic poem had been within every one's reach—anything very definite to do with Bailey's design. This was founded, almost too closely, on that of Goethe's *Faust*. The result of the manipulation of later editions has been more and more to disguise the resemblance of the original draft of *Festus* to its great German forerunner, and to this, therefore, with the edition of 1839 before us, we must give a moment's attention.

Bailey's poem began, not as it does now, but with an abrupt introduction of the reader to Heaven, exactly as in *Faust*, with a "Prolog im Himmel." In each case, God himself speaks, and in a triplet of verses. There is a "Chor der Engel," called by Bailey "Sera-phim" and "Cherubim," and these combine in a great burst of melodious adoration, like "die himmelschen Heerschaaren" in *Faust*. Lucifer demands the soul of *Festus* to sport with, exactly as Mephistopheles asks for *Faust*. When the tempter abruptly appears to his meditating mortal victim, the startled "Who art thou, pray?" of *Festus* is precisely the "Wie nennst du dich?" of *Faust*. Later on, Lucifer and *Festus* ride Ruin and Darkness, the black colts of the Evil One, exactly as *Faust* and Mephistopheles do their black steeds after the Walpurgisnacht. In the 1839 edition of *Festus* the lyrical element is very much more prominent than in the later editions, where it has been steadily superseded by blank verse. These odes and choruses in the

original text are plainly modelled upon the lyrics in the German poem, and, what is curious, it seems to be rather the second than the first part of *Faust* which has attracted the English rhapsodist, whose cantatas closely recall, in their form, those of the "Chor seliger Knaben" and the rest.

It would be interesting to trace the mode in which Goethe influenced the mind of the young Nottingham poet, whose masterpiece was to be the most important contribution to English literature in which rivalry with *Faust* is predominant. Mr. Bailey, I am informed, never resided in Germany, and had but a scanty knowledge of the German language. The only direct reference to Goethe which I have found in his writings occurs in *The Age*, where he remarks that—

Wolfgang's *Faust* flames forth the fire
divine
In many a solid thought and glowing
line—

a couplet of not particularly luminous criticism. I suppose that Bailey was not constrained to spell out the original, since by 1836 Goethe was not without interpreters in this country. The acquaintance of Englishmen with Goethe as a force hardly existed earlier than 1827, when Carlyle's two great essays made their mark. In 1831 Abraham Hayward led the army of translators, with a privately printed *Faust*; and in 1832 a certain sensation was caused in English intellectual circles by the death of Goethe, a reverberating event. Then followed version upon version, comment upon comment; the publication to the outer world of Hayward in 1833, in 1835 the *Faust* of Dr. Anster, eagerly commended by the *Edinburgh Review*, these, we may shrewdly conjecture, were the main media of inspiration to the youthful Bailey, although he probably glanced at the original. Moreover there existed a widely-circulated port-

folio of designs for *Faust* by Ritzsch, with some text in English; these drawings were in the hands of the infant Gabriel Rossetti, it appears, by 1836, and may very well have stimulated the imagination of the adolescent author of *Festus*. There can be, at all events, no awkwardness in comprehending that the latter, without any deep knowledge of the German language, but by a mere happy inevitable instinct, could grasp the essential character of the sublime poem of Goethe, and bend its design to his own ends. The difficulty, I confess, to me is that, as I have said, *Festus* seems to presuppose familiarity with some scenes, at least, of the second part of *Faust*, which had not been published anywhere until 1831, and was but slowly and confusedly recognized in England.

In the evolution of a plot the English drama was far less successful than its German exemplar. The great disadvantage of *Festus* was immediately perceived to be its lack of coherent outline. Elizabeth Barrett remarked that "the fine things were worth looking for, in the design *manqué*." Horne, one of the earliest and most judicious of admirers, lamented that the framework of the poem was unworthy of its eminent beauties of detail. The plot of *Festus* is, in fact, too slight to bear the heavy robes of brocade which are hung about its insufficiency. To make such a work durably weighty it should have an actual story, complicated and animated enough to arrest attention. This was perfectly comprehended by Goethe in the first part of *Faust*. But the narrative element in *Festus* is thin and vague to excess. The hero is a human soul, of the highest gifts and attainments, doomed to despair and melancholy, and unwillingly enslaved to sin. The mode in which he becomes the plaything of the arch-spirit of evil is impressive, but scarcely intelligible; nor are the relations of the tempter to

his victim ever realized in a vividly dramatic or narrative way. It would be an almost impossible feat to separate the "story" or plot of *Festus* from its lyrical and rhetorical ornament. One has to face the fact that the poem exists in and for these purple robes, and that it is essentially a series of transcendent visions, each clothed upon by a fresh set of more or less sumptuous and redundant imagery.

The keynote of *Festus* is a spiritual optimism. The lesson of the poem was easily perceived to be insistence upon the ministry of evil as a purifier. Man was to pass through sin as through a fire, and to come out purged from the dross of humanity. At the opening of the poem the note of hope is struck. In spite of Lucifer, and of all his ingenious activity, Earth and Man are improving. But God (the youthful Bailey was extraordinarily familiar with the mind of the Creator), in a speech of disconcerting petulance, dooms Earth to end: "Earth to death is given," and the plying angels cover their faces. It is by playing upon the depression of one who inhabits an orb which is about to be annihilated that Lucifer obtains his ascendancy over the spirit of Festus; he approaches him in the guise of a giant force, placable and sane, that will give the longed-for happiness. But Festus rejects all the vulgar forms of joy:—

Spirit,

It is not bliss I seek; I care not for it.
I am above the low delights of life.
The life I live is in a dark cold cavern,
Where I wander up and down, feeling
for something
Which is to be; and must be; what, I
know not;
But the incarnation of my destiny
Is nigh . . .
The worm of the world hath eaten out
my heart.

Lucifer is equal to the opportunity; he promises to renew the heart of Festus

within him, and to endow it with immortality in spite of God. Festus wavers, but he is now launched upon a career of supernatural adventures, presented to us in a succession of scenes and visions. These are pleasing in proportion with their seriousness, for Mr. Bailey had none of Goethe's gift of laughter, and his "comic relief" is invariably deplorable. It is in his communion with infinity, in his pictures of impassioned spiritual life, that he is successful, and his flights are most fully to be trusted when they carry him farthest up into the empyrean.

If we analyze the narrative of *Festus*, we are led to strange and awkward conclusions. The Spirit of Evil, embodied in Lucifer, rarely coincides with the ethical action of guilt, and is often actually in collision with it. One does not see what Lucifer has to gain from his ascendancy over *Festus*, since that personage continues melancholy, active in aspiration, in will passionately virtuous. The great evidence of his spiritual peril is the yielding of his intellect to the Devil, but Mr. Bailey is too delicate to carry out this submission to any practical issue. If Lucifer is very audacious, Festus does not embrace the wicked suggestion, but turns and rates the tempter, in tones dignified and courteous, like those of Dr. Primrose reproving sin in Mr. Thornhill. On their Walpurgisnacht-ride over the world, Festus and Lucifer overhear an island-people, on their knees before a maiden fair, singing "Hail Victoria! Princess, hail!" (A.D. 1837), and quaintly enough it seems to be gratitude to Lucifer for having shown him this patriotic scene which finally conquers the scruples of Festus and blinds him to the tempter.

The central incidents of the poem are sometimes difficult to follow. Lucifer takes Festus up into the planet Venus, where they have an interview with the Muse, and where Angela, the dead love

of Festus, appears to him. The scene changes to earth, and Festus is discovered with one "my Helen" at what the stage-direction calls "a large party and entertainment." This episode, or lyrical intermezzo, is long, and breaks the poem into two parts; it was considered very sprightly in the "forties." Festus sings the following song:—

Thy nature is so pure and fine,
'Tis most like wine;
Thy blood, which blushes thro' each vein,
Rosy champagne;
And the fair skin which o'er it grows,
Bright as its snows.
Thy wit, which thou dost work so well,
Is like cool moselle;
Like Madeira, bright and warm,
Is thy smile's charm;
Claret's glory hath thine eye,
Or mine must lie;
But nought can like thy lip possess
Deliciousness!
And now that thou art divinely merry,
I'll kiss and call thee—sparkling sherry.

When Bailey is "divinely merry" he puts the Muses out of countenance; yet this amazing anacreontic has survived through all the editions of *Festus*. The social occasion which opens with this gaiety proves a very lengthy and animated affair; there are romplings and singing of arch songs, and the discomfortable practice of wearing, beneath the lamp, wreaths of flowers which have been dipped in the wine-cup, much prevails. An extraordinary number of kisses, and vows, and amorous forfeits are exchanged, and Lucifer takes a modest and agreeable part in the entertainment. But at Nottingham, in the reign of William IV., the most successful evening parties came to an end before midnight, and one George having gone so far as to propose that a certain Fanny should "fold him bee-like on her bosom's gentle tide," both Festus and Lucifer feel that it is time to separate, and the latter proposes that George should "shake

hands, man, with eternity," or, in other words, should go home to bed. The stage-direction is, "They break up."

From these faded pleasantries it is strange to turn to the serious portions of the poem, which have preserved to a remarkable degree their freshness and sonority. Almost immediately after this "party," so unhappy in its provinciality, we come upon a scene admirably dramatic in tone, and in its excellent ironic note of mockery not unworthy of Goethe or of Ibsen, in which Lucifer, in the guise of a ranter at the door of a church, preaches to the crowd a sermon on predestination, fooling his audience savagely, till, at last, they perceive his intention and turn to kill him. There is nothing of its kind finer in the poetry of that age than this magnificent sermon where it turns from persiflage to contemptuous invective. "Tremble!" cries Lucifer to his conventional congregation—

Tremble! ye dare not believe.
No, cowards! sooner than believe ye
would die.
Die with the black lie flapping on your
lips
Like the soot-flake upon a burning bar.
Be merry, happy if ye can: think never
Of him who slays your souls, nor Him
who saves,—
There's time enough for that when
you're a-dying!

Men are not to resist—such is the gospel of Lucifer; let yourselves go, he preaches, be swept on. Resistance is the beginning of spiritual life, it gives God his chance for leverage. "Prance merrily off, skim like bubbles on the river, for then you are sure to come to me." This is very Goethesque: "stürzt euch in Penelos' Fluth!" one remembers.

Although the subject is so audacious and apocalyptic, the text of the first edition of *Festus* is remarkable for simplicity of diction. There is a general absence of pomposity; the author is in-

spired, with evident earnestness, by a genuine ecstasy of spiritual life. He submits to "visions of sublime convocation," but he avoids the error of translating these into swollen and preposterous language. It is the more needful to insist on this, because in later editions Bailey contrived to spoil his poem in this respect. He lost a great deal of his directness of speech, and he substituted for it, as we shall presently see, a bombastic splendor which did him grievous wrong: But the blank verse of the original *Festus*, which has something of the best parts of Young's *Night Thoughts* (that very stately piece of elaborate rhetoric, nowadays so unjustly decried), is plain, full, and direct, with curious touches of realism. Its lyrics are less happy. Sometimes, as in the ballad of "The Gipsy Maid," we have such a vivid improvisation as we could imagine a bard composing by a watch-fire in a mountain-pass, with no art, no care, yet with a long breath of melancholy music. But, in the main, it is the non-lyrical parts of *Festus* which fascinate its readers now as they did those of sixty years ago, by their unsatisfied yearnings after infinity, their enfranchised metaphysical speculation, and their uplifted clarion-cries of melody and vision.

III.

Reviewers of the prevailing school, who held that poetry should be rational, broad and calm, received *Festus* in 1839 with bewilderment. To some of them it seemed less an achievement in art than an exercise in theological mysticism run mad. But the general verdict of the best judges was highly favorable, and when it became known that it was the production of a youth of two-and-twenty, it was looked upon as a kind of portent. There seemed nothing preposterous in comparing

such a work with the famous monuments of literary precocity, with the *Ode on Christ's Nativity*, with the *Essay on Criticism*, with *Endymion*. What might not the author attain to? It could not be questioned that *Festus* was a better poem than *Queen Mab*; why should young Bailey not grow up to be as great a poet as Shelley? Already he possessed sustained powers of a very high order. He had actually achieved, at these his tender years, a body of philosophical verse, strenuous, fervent and elevated. He had already, as Swift might have said, his wings and his music. What he lacked was what youth never possesses, a sense of proportion, a delicacy of workmanship, a full command over his materials. These would naturally follow with the ripening years, "which mellow what we write to the dull sweets of rhyme."

By what inscrutable fate was it ordained that in this case the gifts never ripened at all? At twenty-three Bailey was perhaps the most "promising" of living English poets, and at eighty-six that promise was still to be fulfilled. In 1902, as in 1839, Philip James Bailey was the author of *Festus*, neither more nor less. Had he died in the last-mentioned year he would have retained a foremost place among our "inheritors of unfulfilled renown"; he would be habitually mentioned with Chatterton. But, by the oddest irony, he survived, actively endeavoring to improve his position, until extreme old age, and yet was never able to recapture his earliest melody and fervor. Meanwhile his arrested development and successive mishaps did not affect to any appreciable degree the fate of his solitary production, which continued and continues still to have a wide circle of readers. The case is odd in itself and singular in the history of our literature.

The earliest reception of *Festus* was mainly by those most intimately inter-

ested in the art of poetry. Tennyson, Bulwer Lytton, Thackeray, the Brownings and Horne were among its few original admirers and advocates. But as time went on the ring of readers spread further outwards and became steadily less esoteric. The edition of 1846, which bore the author's name on the title-page, greatly added to the quantity of his readers, but took something from their quality. Tennyson, who had been rapturous, while advising FitzGerald to read *Festus*—"There are really *very grand* things in it"—confessed that his correspondent would "most likely find it a great bore." (Any human being, by the way, less likely to appreciate *Festus* than FitzGerald it would be difficult to imagine.) The Brownings, even, now saw spots in the sun. But with this slackening of technical or professional interest in Bailey, there grew up a public sympathy founded on the matter of his poem, its theological positions, its doctrine of ultimate salvation, its bewitching theory of remedial chastisement, its universalism. This process of divorce from the purely literary current of the time has continued ever since, and is the cause of several of the anomalies of Mr. Bailey's celebrity.

Borne on the tide of imaginative earnestness, the young author had declared that whatever he had received, in a rush of improvisation, was made independent of the workmanlike attributes of the art by the fulness of his message and the abundance of his imagery. With incomparable boldness, this lad of twenty-three had written as the colophon of his poem:—

Read this, world! He who writes is
dead to thee,
But still lives in these leaves. He
spoke inspired:
Night and day, thought came un-
helped, undesired,
Like blood to his heart.

This is an impressive attitude; so long

as the inspiration lasts; but suppose it to be withdrawn? It is then that the rhapsodist feels the lack of that craft and discipline of art which he scorned in the hour of his prophetic afflatus. There was never a greater disappointment than attended the publication of Mr. Bailey's second volume, *The Angel World*, in 1850. The opportunity was matchless, since a generation had now grown up emancipated from all the sedative legislation of Southey and Taylor. Highly-colored poetry was at present in fashion; imagination had reasserted its supremacy over reason. There was no fear that Bailey's verse would be reproved because of its excess of force and fervor. But *The Angel World*, in Jeffrey's phrase, "wouldn't do." It was a kind of celestial romance in blank verse, faintly reminiscent of *Eloa* and still more faintly of *The Loves of the Angels*. It repeated, in less seductive accents, the universalist dogma of *Festus*—good and bad alike were finally to be lapped in the mantle of the Eternal rest:

They who had erred and they who
taught to err,
Along with those who, wise and pure,
withstood,

But it was, either as a tale or as a sermon, extraordinarily unexhilarating. However, although the little volume has never been re-issued, the reader may in this matter indolently form his own opinion, since Bailey, finding that people would not accept *The Angel World*, formed an ingenious and unfortunate project, which he continued to carry out for the rest of his life. If a poem was received by the critics and the public with marked disfavor, he would be even with them by putting it bodily into the next edition of *Festus*. The argument in his mind seems to have been something like this: "You won't read my new piece, and you say you prefer *Festus*? Very well, then it

shall form part of *Festus*, and so you will be obliged to read it." Accordingly, as research will prove, *The Angel World* was broken into two parts, and was silently implanted in the middle of the next edition of *Festus*, with such verbal adaptations as were necessary, but otherwise without change.

Internal evidence tends to show that the crushing failure of *The Angel World* convinced the poet of his error in depending wholly on improvisation or "inspiration." In 1855 he published *The Mystic*, a volume which displays a close preoccupation with form. It consists of three unrelated poems, of which the first is modelled on Shelley's *Alastor*, while the second, called "A Spiritual Legend," is a strenuous and almost violent *pastiche* of Miltonic blank verse, the stresses and inversions and elisions of the rhythm of *Paradise Lost* being reproduced as though for a wager. In particular, the Miltonic use of proper names is introduced without restraint, so as to produce at length an almost ludicrous effect, although often in itself beautiful in its full echo of Milton:

By great Shedad, city occult, whose
walls
Towered in alternate tiers of silver and
gold;
Where bright Herat, city of roses,
lights
With dome and minaret the landskip
green;
Damasek old, old Byblos, or Babel,
Or Tchelminar, or Baalbek, or where
Balkh,
Mother of cities, murally encrowned,
Mourns.

There are magnificent lines in both these poems, but especially in "A Spiritual Legend." The fault of them is: their obscurity, their vagueness; it is, frankly, impossible to know what *The Mystic* is all about. They must be considered mainly as exercises in versification, undertaken, oddly and perhaps pathetically, by a poet who felt that:

something divine, a gift of youth, was slipping from him, and who determined to recapture it by a tardy and vain pre-occupation with the form and structure of verse.

Certain fragments of the volume of 1855 were shredded, in the extraordinary fashion already mentioned, into the ever-swelling *Festus*, although most of *The Mystic* was rebellious to this kind of adaptation. But Bailey had formed the idea, long before this, that the original outline of *Festus* was sufficiently elastic to be stretched indefinitely: "more or less"—ambiguous phrase!—he had perceived this from the beginning, he wrote in 1880. He worked everything into the design of his drama, he accounted for all his later fancies and rhapsodies by thinking, "This will do for *Festus*." He thought that there had been revealed to him a new and more rational idea of Hell, and he now scarcely wrote anything in which his ideas of the limitation of punishment and the eternity of universal bliss did not find place.

A curious example of this persistency may be given. The last of the three pieces which form the volume of 1855 is a ballad called "A Fairy Tale"; it is one of Bailey's least fortunate productions, a languid and insipid story of how a little girl was disporting at eve in a verdant ring, when she was pounced down upon by the fairies, and persuaded to live with them. The hasty reader might easily see in this nothing but a piece of unusually guileless and puerile early Victorian mock-romance, but if he pushes on he will find his Bailey. The little girl casually discovers that the fairies are greatly depressed by their lack of a soul, so she sits up at the flower-embroidered banquet and eloquently propounds to Sir Oberon and to "divine Titania, night's incomparable queen," the glad theory of universal salvation. It really

became with Bailey a King Charles's head.

Of the later publications of Mr. Bailey it is kinder not to speak in detail. *The Age*, of 1858, was a satire on the manners and morals of the day, in heroic couplets; *Universal Hymn*, in Thomsonian blank verse, of 1867, was cut up, in the usual way, to feed that poetical Oliver Twist, the insatiable *Festus*; *Nottingham Castle*, of 1878, was an attempt at an historical ode in the grand style. No poet ever did more in his later years to destroy the favorable impression created by the writings of his youth. For the last quarter of a century Mr. Bailey has given up the vain attempt to attract readers to his miscellaneous writings. He frankly abandoned them, and we need not dwell upon them. He could afford to throw these punier children of his brain to the wolves, because of the really formidable proportions which his first-born had gradually attained. To a recent visitor he said, plainly, that he was the author of one book, and that is what he will remain in the chronicle of literature. His obstinate determination to present his string of scenes as a whole, in spite of the hopelessly invertebrate character of the design, has in the end led to a sort of acceptance of *Festus* as a definite achievement.

IV.

Of attempts to "place" the author of *Festus* in relation to other authors, the earliest, so far as I am able to discover, was that made by Robert Chambers in 1858. This careful critic, surveying the literature of his day, observed "a group of philosophical poets—men of undoubted talent, learning and poetic imagination, but too often obscure, mystical and extravagant." This group, he explained, consisted of P. J. Bailey, Robert Browning and Richard Hengist Horne. To-day the differences between

Festus, *Paracelsus* and *Orion* are more striking than the similarities, but Bailey had a pronounced admiration for both the latter poems. For the Brownings Mr. Bailey preserved an enthusiastic regard, but there is no trace of their style upon his.¹ In fact, we look in vain for contemporary influences in *Festus*; Goethe for matter, Milton, Thomson and Shelley for manner, were Bailey's masters, and occasionally he was faintly touched by Byron. It will be found that what was ultimately discarded from *Festus* as immature is in the main Byronic. The prevailing Byronism was a weed which he uprooted from his poetic garden, as Tennyson and Browning are said to have done from theirs.

Mr. Bailey's interest in the successive generations which he saw rise up and pass away was kindly but fluctuating. He liked a gorgeous texture in poetry, and was therefore attracted to D. G. Rossetti and much later to Lord de Tabley. About 1872-75 he indulged, anonymously, in a certain amount of reviewing, and said very kind and delicate things about some of the poets that were at that time making their first bow to the public. But more interesting is the fact that in the fifties he was taken as a model by a group of writers who made a great stir for the moment, and are now too readily forgotten. These were the Spasmodists, as they were called, who accepted the rather formless *Festus* as the pattern for huge semi-dramatic pieces more amorphous still; Alexander Smith, in *A Life Drama* (1853), Sydney Dobell, in *Balder* (1854), and J. Stanyan Bigg, in *Night and the Soul* (1854), displayed themselves as the docile and reverent offspring of Bailey. Why the influence of *Festus* suddenly, after so many

years, made its appearance thus sown broadcast, is curious, and curious too the extravagance of these imitations. Perhaps no one ever soared and sank so violently as did the author of *Night and the Soul*. Yet even the Spasmodists had merits, which might detain a critic, but here they are interesting to us only as a cluster of satellites oddly circling round the planet of *Festus* in its mid-career.

The Spasmodists imitated Mr. Bailey's ecstasy, but not his moral earnestness and not his original strain of religious philosophy. His was a mind of greater weight and fuller body than theirs. He was often redundant and sometimes nebulous, but there was always something definite behind the colored cloud. His occasional excursions into prose were not fortunate, for his style was awkward and heavy, and he liked to coin impossible words: he says "evilhood," for instance, although even he seems to have blenched before the use of "goodhood." His prose was unattractive, therefore, but it is worth examining, because it reveals the intense convictions which led the writer onward. In natural temperament, I think, Mr. Bailey was timid, but in his determination to thrust his message on the world he showed an absolute courage which neither ridicule, nor argument, nor neglect could shake in the slightest degree. And this may bring us to a reflection to which the study of *Festus* must inevitably lead, namely that in this his single-minded earnestness lay the secret of Mr. Bailey's reward. A word to indicate in what way this operated must close this brief study of his work and character.

By a curious misuse of a phrase which has become almost a journalistic cliché, Mr. Bailey has been recently

¹ Miss F. C. Carey, the niece and constant companion of Mr. Bailey, tells me that her uncle became acquainted with "Paracelsus" immediately after the publication of "*Festus*,"

probably in 1840, as the gift of Westland Marston. This disposes of any idea of the influence of the earlier on the later poem.

called a "poet's poet." If this term has a meaning at all, it refers to the quality which makes certain writers, whose nature leads them to peculiar delicacy of workmanship, favorites with their fellow-craftsmen, although little comprehended by the vulgar. Mr. Bailey was the exact opposite of these poets. There was nothing in his work to attract students of what is exquisitely put, and, as a rule, he has been little appreciated by these rarer spirits. His form is so plain as to be negligible; it is in his matter, in his ethical attitude, that he is found attractive by those—and they are numerous—who in several generations have come under his spell. *Festus* appeals to the non-literary temperament, which is something very different indeed from saying that it ap-

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peals to the anti-literary. Those who love it appreciate its imagery, its large music, its spacious landscape, but they value it mainly for its teaching. No purely æsthetic estimate of the poem will satisfy those who reply, "Yes, what you say is technically true, no doubt; but it has helped and comforted me, and it helps me still." In many a distant home, in America even oftener than in Great Britain, a visit to some invalid's room would reveal the presence of two volumes on the bed, the one a Bible, the other *Festus*. This is an element in the popularity of Mr. Bailey which criticism is powerless to analyze. But no consideration of his remarkable career is complete if a record of it is neglected.

Edmund Gosse.

SOME GOSSIP ABOUT OLD PRINTS.

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL C. A. COURT, C.M.G.

Few of us expect any remarkable initiative on the part of a Government office, and it is therefore with the greater pleasure that many people in all classes of life will have read the announcement that the Board of Education has projected a Loan Exhibition of Engraving and Etching for the early months of next year. The news will be welcomed by the wide and ever-increasing circle of enthusiastic print-collectors, who have hitherto been seldom able to examine and compare at their leisure the best work of the leading exponents of this fascinating art.

Superb as is the collection of the British Museum, and models of courtesy though the attendants are, the Print Room is undeniably more adapted to the examination of single specimens than to the survey of a period

or of a style. The prints are all stored away in portfolios, and some time is necessarily lost in tracing them and presenting them to visitors, with the consequence that this storehouse of gems is but little known to the general public. Space is wanting, and also the means of exhibiting specimens on the walls. What is required is a separate establishment, a large gallery for exhibition, a more generous endowment, and a better appreciation of the great artistic value of the treasures amassed by the intelligent foresight of our predecessors.

Another point deserving of consideration by the Government, now that it is engaged in turning its swords into "scrapers," is the question of revising the very strict rules which debar the Museum from lending their fine prints even for the purposes of an official ex-

hibition. These precautions are really excessive, and might at least be relaxed in the case of the numerous duplicates which the Museum possesses. After all, the prints belong to the nation, and the nation has the right to look at them.

The programme of the forthcoming Exhibition is a very extensive one, embracing as it does old and modern copper and steel engravings, line, mezzotint, stipple, aquatint, and etching. I shall only venture one criticism of the scheme—namely, that, although it is on a smaller scale than what was first contemplated, it is still too pretentious and covers too wide a field, affording grounds for doubt whether the officials have quite realized the magnitude of the ambitious task they have set themselves with such a light heart. It would have been better, in my opinion, to have restricted the Exhibition to one period or one style of engraving—say, the mezzotints of the latter half of the eighteenth century—and to have postponed the remainder of the scheme to a later date. Even with such a more moderate programme the selection and arrangement of the prints would have proved no light task; for no two mezzotinters work alike, and each one expresses his own artistic temperament and individuality in his plates. It is also hardly fair upon those who worked in the dainty and delicate art of stippling to place their miniatures—for the best examples really deserve the name—alongside the grand, bold, and powerful mezzotints of a Richard Earlom or a Valentine Green. It is even less fair upon the old line artists; for the depth, tone, poetry, and richness of mezzotint spoil the eye for the simultaneous consideration and enjoyment of the masterpieces of line engraving.

What the modern mezzotinters will think of being placed alongside the great engravers of the past I do not

know. A few—alas! how few—will bear the comparison; but machine-made paper and steel-faced plates, combined with the absence of the toning and mellowing effect of time, will place them at a grievous disadvantage in such high company.

If the idea is merely to please all sorts and conditions of men and women, no doubt the catholic taste of the Board will attract numbers to South Kensington; but the tremendous difficulty of choice in so wide a field will scarcely permit the Board to fulfil its educational mission with desirable completeness, and there is a danger of interest lapsing in a wilderness of engraved space. Take mezzotints, for example. It is no doubt easy to name, and perhaps to secure on loan, a few hundreds of the best known and most desirable prints; but to convey an adequate and instructive exposition of this finest of fine arts, much order, method, and research are required. It would be necessary, as an act of bare justice, to begin with Ludwig von Siegen's portrait of Amella Elizabeth, Dowager Landgravine of Hesse, the first known example of mezzotint, dating from 1642; to follow it by Prince Rupert's Great Executioner, produced sixteen years later; and then to exhibit, step by step, by means of the choicest works of all the best masters, the gradual advance of the art to the perfection it achieved in the closing years of the eighteenth century. Nor would it be either unwise or unprofitable to mark the decline of the art, after the last of the later masters, S. W. Reynolds, Charles Turner, David Lucas, and Samuel Cousins had done their best work. It would also be well not only to give portraits of the engravers to whom we owe so much, but to follow each one by his choicest examples in their various "states," and to show examples of altered and touched plates and of reverses or counter-proofs. To

be complete such an Exhibition should show the copper-plates themselves in their various states of preparation, more particularly in the stages of the process known as "laying the ground," in which I think modern practice has gone astray, and also to show the cradles, scrapers, roulettes, and burnishers used by engravers at various periods. Such an Exhibition would be a real education in mezzotint and a triumph for South Kensington; but considering the great variety of styles and schools favored by the Board, one must entertain some doubt whether it will become a practical reality. *Qui trop embrasse mal étreint!*

However, after these preliminary grumbles one may frankly and unreservedly admit that all lovers of fine prints will be sincerely grateful that a British Government has at last given official countenance and recognition to an art which appeals in many ways to an even more numerous class than painting itself.¹

One of the greatest charms of the mezzotint is the fact that by adoption and practice it is an essentially British monopoly. One can use the word "British" advisedly, for, if comparatively few of the best engravers have hailed from north of the Tweed, it was an Irishman, MacArdell, who kept alive the sacred fire at a time when it was threatened by extinction, while other Irishmen—Brooks, Purcell, Houston, Ford, Dixon, Fisher, and James Watson—continued the work and helped to perpetuate the healthiest traditions.

Whatever the art may owe to Von Siegen, Caspar à Furstenberg, and Thomas of Ypres, not one of their foreign contemporaries are worthy of mention beside the great British masters of the eighteenth century. The

latter must always occupy a privileged and distinguished position in the world of art, not only on account of the intrinsic merits of their productions in British eyes, but because the longer the space of time that elapses the more pre-eminent and unrivalled does their work appear to all connoisseurs and art-lovers in all classes and in all lands. Valentine Green at his best in his translations of Reynolds's masterpieces, J. R. Smith the immortal, Dixon, the two Watsons, Dean, Dickenson, Earlom, the Wards, Spillsbury, and S. W. Reynolds have one and all produced work of the very highest excellence; and Sir Joshua never spoke a truer word than when he prophesied that he would be immortalized by the engravers. They have carried his name and his fame and those of his great contemporaries into countless homes which would otherwise possess no records of the grand epoch of British art, and they have done more to popularize the fine arts than any academy or society in existence.

Strangely enough, the number of really good judges of fine prints in England is extremely limited. There are of course the great London dealers, and scattered here and there a few more in the provinces—*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*; there are some millionaire collectors and a small but very enthusiastic band of amateur connoisseurs; but taking the mass of the people, it is really astounding, considering the number interested in the art and the large number of ready buyers, how few know a good print when they see one or understand the alphabet of the art. How few there are who can go to Christie's and select a print on their own judgment without consulting a dealer: how many there are who at provincial sales constantly let slip the

¹ I am asked to express a hope that collectors who may chance to read this article will offer any fine prints they possess to the Secretary of

the Exhibition of Engraving and Etching, Board of Education, South Kensington, in the course of the current month.—Ed. B. M.

opportunity of acquiring modest fortunes for the want of a little trouble and a little study. For study and experience are both required, and there is no royal road to print-collecting, be the collector never so satisfied with his eye and his judgment: there is a very formidable literature to assimilate, books too which bring high prices and cannot easily be procured, and then there is the need for frequenting the British Museum or some other fine collection, and of studying the psychology of the sale-rooms.

Every now and then the general public reads languidly of high prices paid for old engravings, yet to the great majority the paragraph conveys little. There are hundreds who read these things in blissful ignorance that they possess on the walls of their country-houses, or stored away in old portfolios in their attics, treasures many times more valuable than the speculative investments which they study nervously after breakfast in the City article of the "Times." Others, again, reading of 1200 guineas cheerfully paid for an old engraving, believe that the hobby of collecting is reserved for millionaires, and despair of acquiring treasures of such value. Yet with care and with time it is quite possible, even *à l'heure qu'il est*, to build up a collection representative of the whole history of British engraving, without excessive expenditure, if judgment waits on knowledge and patience on both. Taking the very lowest point of view, and regarding collecting as a mere monetary speculation, there is no better investment in the market than old engravings of the right sort, since values have for years been steadily rising at the rate of perhaps over 20 per cent per annum. The Blyth sale last year was a case in point: this collection had been made by the late Mr. Blyth, advised by one of the best of the London dealers, during some fif-

teen years before his death at a cost of about £7000, and if my memory is not at fault it realized something like £27,000 at public auction. No great collection of the best sort has since come under the hammer: had such fate befallen the magnificent collection of the late Lord Cheylesmore, all previous records would undoubtedly have been far surpassed.

To-day the rage is all for "first states" of the full-length portraits of women after Reynolds and his greatest colleagues, and for the most exquisite of the old stippled prints in colors. On the other hand, engraved portraits of famous men, Scriptural, historical, and some allegorical designs, and all line engravings, except those of the French school, go for next to nothing. A collector of taste who does not slavishly follow the fashion can acquire the finest proofs of Woollett's work after the Smiths or Richard Wilson for about a fifth of the price paid thirty years ago. Many of these things are superb. Take, for example, Woollett's First and Second Premium prints: for breadth and vigor of execution in the foregrounds and for tenderness and lightness of touch in the distances these works have never been equalled, and will probably never be surpassed. Fortunate is the collector who can secure them, for fashion always, sooner or later, returns from its rambles and recognizes whatever is really fine and meritorious in art.

The reason why prints of women frequently run up to 1000 guineas while proofs of men's portraits can still be bought for a few pounds is quite simple. *Men* buy pictures, and they have the good taste to prefer the ladies. From the point of view of art this is absurd, as Euclid used to depress our youth by inauspiciously observing; but fashion is a woman, and the wise man will not argue with her. At the same time one must candidly

admit that, granted Fox was a great parliamentarian and Wesley a moving preacher, the counterfeited presentment of such celebrities cannot honestly be described as decorative, and it is this quality in the portraits of old masters which now secures such high prices.

Some day perhaps an enterprising patron of the fine arts will be sufficiently patriotic to desire to restore the lost charms of both stipple and mezzotint. The thing is possible, and from every point of view is worth doing. I believe there is one stipple engraver left in England, but I cannot name a second, nor do I believe that the solitary exponent of the school which Ryland and Bartolozzi founded, and Burke, Tomkins, and Caroline Watson brought to such a pitch of excellence, is by any means overwhelmed with commissions. Yet, at the very apogee of the early English school of painting, stippled prints, married to color engraving, commanded a ready sale, and the best examples realize long prices in the sale-rooms to-day. Mezzotint, it is true, is still very much in evidence, but how terribly fallen from its high estate! Take a print engraved about 1790 and place it alongside the best of the modern work, and cease to wonder why even a second-rate portrait of the old school commands a hundred times the value of the modern print. In the former there is depth, tone, harmony, a soft and velvety impression, richness and warmth, and, above all, character: the modern print, on the other hand, though often brilliant and effective, is generally cold, flat, hard, and unsympathetic. It is not that our modern artist-engravers fail, it is their public that fails them—the publishers, who insist on steel-faced plates for the sake of facility for reproduction; the buyers, who cannot distinguish what they have lost by the absence of the soft and ductile qualities of the old copper-

plates. But the plate is not everything: the modern system of "laying the ground" of the plate differs materially from the old: the hard, unresponsive, machine-made paper now used is also incapable of receiving and absorbing the ink in the manner done by the old hand-made paper: the ink, the act of printing—all is changed. Artists do not now give the personal attention to their engravers' plates that they used to do, while engravers expect the printers to do half the work. Thus, while engravers and printers are often equal to the old school as artists, and generally superior to them as draughtsmen and mechanics, the work they turn out is immeasurably inferior. I can see no vestige of a sign that it will ripen and harmonize as the old engraving seems to have done with the lapse of time, and our only consolation is that the paper will probably crumble away before the century closes, and the entire product of the age be lost to futurity.

I believe this can all be changed. I believe that copper-plates can be made precisely identical with the old, and the ground laid similarly by the careful study of a good model. Hand-made paper of the right sort can be provided when the demand for it begins, and meanwhile the old paper can still be procured, though with difficulty. All the rest is a matter of close attention to detail. Going into the matter with a leading publisher in London, I found that the cost of issuing a single plate in the way I have indicated would amount to £400, half of which represents the fee of a leading engraver at the head of his profession. Now, with a copper-plate one cannot safely reckon on more than twenty proofs and fifty print copies before the plate may have to be reworked and perhaps ruined: one would therefore have to issue the proofs at, say, £10 and the prints at £4 to merely

cover the expenses, apart from all question of profit, and there would still be the risk of the work not finding a market if the subject were not wisely chosen and the engraving not well done.

In the old days a proof rarely cost more than two guineas on publication, and a print from 5s. to a sovereign according to the size of the plate, and there was still a good profit secured. All fees and expenses were lower. I am inclined to think that the public would be quick to recognize a return to the best traditions, and would not be averse to pay rather a higher price than at present: the small issue and rarity of each print would also be an additional attraction. In any case it is my belief that both stipple and mezzotint could be restored to the artistic excellence achieved a hundred years ago; but it is not likely that this will be done unless some patriotic person is prepared to risk his money, and is not disheartened by a first failure. Should, however, any lover of the art care to embark upon the undertaking on the chance of coupling his name with the revival of the best traditions of an important English art, I would willingly give my time to the supervision of the details, every one of which is important not only in itself but in relation to the artistic harmony of the whole.

I am often asked to advise about buying prints, and my advice is always to buy the best things and not to waste money on the purchase of inferior impressions of even good subjects. Better one fine Valentine Green of a full-length Reynolds than fifty cheap prints or worn impressions.

Above all, a beginner should be encouraged to exercise independence of judgment; for in art, as in everything else, there is a great tendency to follow the fashion. If a collector has good taste and good judgment, and

knows how to wait, he will be sure to succeed; if not, no amount of advice will be of any service to him. He may choose a period, an artist, an engraver, or a style, and resolutely adhere to his specialty, or he may have a more catholic taste, and prefer to have a few examples of all schools and styles. The first method is well suited to a collector who stores his treasures in portfolios, the second to wall decoration. In the first case the question of margin assumes a certain importance, especially for the preservation of the prints from ill-usage; in the second, brilliancy of impression comes first, but margin must not be neglected, since the fact must be recognized that a wide margin adds very materially to the market value of a print. In hanging prints upon a wall there are questions of framing, of light, of wall-paper, and of arrangement, all of which require taste and supervision, in order that the prints may appear to the best advantage. Much of the beauty of old engravings can be, and often is, lost by bad framing, ill-chosen mounts, or unsuitable wall-papers: a fierce garish light is also a disadvantage. Every collector has his own ideas about framing and mounting: personally I prefer black-and-gold of English make for all uncolored prints; fairly simple gilt frames of old patterns for colored prints, and French gilt frames for all the French school, whether plain or colored. Wall-papers should in all cases be without pattern, or at most with barely definable vertical lines: a particular shade of deepish red is best, but olive-green is equally effective: whites and yellows are hopeless, and pinks only suitable for prints issued since 1820.

It has been very well said that if you want to know an individual you must spend ten days in a country-house with him or with her as the case may be, and in the same way there is no more

infallible guide to the excellence or reverse of a print than to have it under close observation for a time in one's own house. It is curious to observe how some prints grow on one, and this is especially true of the masterly works of J. R. Smith: others, again, which may have attracted at first, fail to stand the test of intimacy. No one, of course, should attempt to combine in one room a variety of periods and styles. The mezzotints of the earlier masters up to 1770 should be kept apart from the works of the grand period of 1770-1800; stipple work, whether plain or colored, must be kept away from the mezzotints; and the French school demands a place by itself. Everything later than S. W. Reynolds must be regarded as modern: it cannot exist side by side with the grand productions of the old engravers, not even if the signature be that of Samuel Cousins himself. The first two works of this engraver which secured his reputation were his *Master Lambton* and *Lady Acland*: both are undeniably superb in proof state before the title. His *Lady Grey*, *Countess Gower*, and *Mrs. Wolff* are also very fine indeed, and his *Lady Grosvenor* and *Nature good but overrated*. For the rest he is very uneven, and has the misfortune to be also very hackneyed. I think that his first two works after *Lawrence* show the merit of his teaching by that fine artist S. W. Reynolds, and that a proof before letters of *Master Lambton* is the best print of the nineteenth century, and one of the most perfect things that money can buy, but that, on the whole, the relative position which Cousins holds in the sale-rooms is far too exalted.

The test of propinquity soon brings out a very important point—namely, what are the companionable prints and what the reverse. There can be no doubt whatever that the prints which attract and hold one's interest longest

are the great mezzotint portraits of that period of giants, extending from somewhere about 1770 to 1800—that magic period of some thirty years which saw all, or nearly all, the best work done. The best portraits of this date are a real pleasure to live with and it is the same for many contemporary subject pieces, not labelled portraits, such as *Walton's Fruit-Barrow* and *The Promenade at Carlisle House*, both engraved by J. R. Smith, and others one could name of the same character. These things are the aristocracy of this fascinating art, and any new-comers placed beside them are only admitted on sufferance until they are found to be worthy of their surroundings.

I have only one fault to find with mezzotints, and it is that many of them are too dark. Contrary to the practice of the line-engraver and the etcher, the scraper of a mezzotint works from dark to light, and is often prone, out of sheer laziness, to leave large portions of his plate unworked or only lightly defined. There are, of course, many brilliant exceptions—*Dean* and *J. R. Smith*, for example, whose plates are generally bright and luminous throughout, constituting not the least of their great charm. Another point—rather a misfortune than a fault—is the absence of good examples of landscape in the works of the great engravers of the eighteenth century. That mezzotint is capable of adapting itself to the treatment of landscape is beyond a doubt; but, except here and there a *Hobbema* or two, we have to be contented with those charming little glimpses that form the backgrounds of some of the great portraits, and these glimpses rather whet our appetite than satisfy it, making us regret that the talents of the Dutch and English schools of the period were so largely devoted to portraiture. True it is that mezzotint

is peculiarly adapted to the delineation of flesh-tints, draperies, silks, satins, and all the delicate half-tones that make for so much in a fine portrait: at the same time, David Lucas's "English Landscape" series after Constable has shown us, at a later date, how well adapted the art is for the rendering of landscape, and these comparatively modern successes make one all the more keenly regret that a few men of the grand school, and S. W. Reynolds among the later masters, did not give us more evidence of their talents in this direction. Charming as the work of Lucas is when found in the earliest impressions, it is not absolutely perfection, having the defect of being surcharged with heavy blacks and deep shadows for the purpose of contrast with the high lights: such as it is, however, it is about the best thing in mezzotint landscape we possess, and comes next to the finest of Woollett's line work, which still retains its pride of place.

We are continually told by accomplished writers that the present price of old engravings is fictitious, and has been reached, by means of a skilfully engineered boom, by a ring of dealers. We are solemnly warned that a slump is impending, and that prices will soon give way and go down with a run. There are rings in all trades, but no one who knows much about sale-rooms will admit that the printsellers are disposed to force up the prices paid at auctions. Their action is rather in the other direction; and as they are practically the only, and in any case the chief, buyers at sales, it is manifestly not to their advantage to make the market too dear. I can see no signs whatever of an impending fall in prices; on the contrary, the omens are all the other way. Taste and the means of education, research, and comparison are greatly superior to what they were, and if fashion still neglects

many fine prints and exaggerates the value of others, it has on the whole fairly decided at last upon the beautiful and valuable things, and the prices of these will continue to steadily rise. Old books, old pictures, tapestries, curios, furniture, china, and bric-a-brac of all kinds increase in value year by year. It is a simple matter of supply and demand. Every year the supply decreases, and more fine things get locked up in the collections of rich men or in those cold tombs of museums. Every year more buyers come forward and the demand increases: it is the rise in prices alone that tempts all but executors to part with their treasures. There has been a marked decrease in the quality of prints offered for sale during the season which closed in July last: the names often sounded well, but the engravings themselves often proved most disappointing. Foreign collectors in all countries have thoroughly recognized the artistic merits of the early English school of engraving, and their buyers are busy in the field: at sales abroad the prices rule higher than they do in England, a good test of the justice of the complaint made against our printsellers. For the moment, Boston and Chicago millionaires hardly distinguish between mezzotint and photogravure, but example is contagious. Mr. Morgan and other rich Americans are collecting on a grand scale, and once the practice of buying prints by the yard and Caxtons by the hundredweight becomes generalized in the States, the Americans will raise the prices both of prints and of books to famine point.

Had "print states" been numbered consecutively by the old publishers we should now have graduated prices and some means of fixing approximate values from year to year: as matters stand, it is almost impossible to fix the money value of a good old engraving. The general public lumps together all

print states as of equal value, whether the work is palpably one struck off just after the proofs or when the plate was worn out.

The highest art in print-collecting is the faculty of recognizing and securing early and brilliant print impressions, which differ hardly at all from the proofs themselves. A constant source of disappointment is the belief that because one print has fetched so much at auction another of the same subject, and apparently identical in "state," size, and description, will realize the same figure. Sale prices taken by themselves are absolutely meaningless unless the collector has himself seen the print sold and taken note of its condition. It may be a good impression or a bad one; it may be rubbed, creased, torn, harmed by a fault in printing, worm-eaten, restored, badly cleaned, or bleached beyond recognition; it may have been cut down so that the platemark is lost or the whole subject not given; it may be "laid down" on cardboard, touched up or strengthened; it may have uncut margins or no margin at all; and the inscription may be complete or partly wanting, or pasted on. None of these points are mentioned in a list of sale prices, and yet every one affects the value. Even with all faults and blemishes it may become a bone of contention for two amateurs who may have left unlimited commissions for its purchase, and the price may mount up to many times the value of the print. Old engravings are not like candles, all equal of their sort and saleable at so much a dozen: they vary as widely as the price of yearlings at Newmarket sales, and generally for far better reasons. Engravings have one great pull over oills: it is that, given equal care, the print will preserve its freshness and life when the picture is a ghost of its former self. Prints also preserve for us the faithful record of

great works lost or destroyed, such, for instance, as Reynolds's great portrait of the Duchess of Rutland, burnt at Belvoir in 1816.

As a hobby, print-collecting is to my mind one of the most fascinating of pursuits, allowing endless scope for interesting study, judgment, decision, and independence of opinion. The print-collector adorns and beautifies his house with his treasures, surrounding himself with the portraits of famous men and women whose names have made history, with the scenes of great events, the truthful record of the daily and domestic life of all classes, the heroic and the commonplace side by side, and all explanatory of their time. Here is a famous duchess, Georgiana of Devonshire; there Polly Kennedy, the not less queenly and dignified demi-mondaine who won such a tribute of admiration from Reynolds—"the face has more grace and dignity than anything I have ever done." Here is the strong and manly face of David Garrick; and farther on the portrait of an even greater actor on a larger stage, Applan's Bonaparte, surrounded by Whitworth, Castlereagh, Pitt, Nelson, and others intimately connected with the history of the great war. Here again is the salon at Carlisle House, with portraits of many famous men and women; there, a life-like scene from a back-slum in Chelsea; mothers and their children after Lawrence, Romney's idealizations of his imperishable model, Gainsborough shepherdesses, Hoppner beauties, princes and ploughboys, duchesses and dairymaids, scenes and idylls and costumes from the every-day life in all classes of a great and a rising people. It is not possible to surround oneself with a similar record of any age or time, and these beautiful things—for even the commonplace are beautiful—breathe life and meaning into history as one reads it,

and explain many things, many great actions, many failings, many crimes, as no memoir and no history can ever possibly do for us. The alliance of history and prints is a natural union: with the two together the past is no longer a sealed book—it lives! Not that the French school should be neglected. On the contrary, it is eminently artistic and pleasing, and represents such radically different ways of thought and means of expressing them that it clashes in no way with our own fine school, and rather serves as the natural pendant to it. Greuze, Fragonard, Debucourt, Lavreince, St. Aubin, Janinet, Freudeberg, Moreau le Jeune, and many others, have left us a delightful record in its way of the age they lived in, more particularly in the detail of costume and in the representation of interiors. But here art comes first and nature limps along with halting steps almost out of sight: the manliness, fidelity to life, and breadth of treatment of the English school are wanting: we tire à la fin des fins even of Greuze's prettiness and Fragonard's sham pastorals, and are mainly attracted by the remarkable technique and delicate work of the best of the French engravers.

Cavillers are always ready to remark that engraving is only an imitative faculty and does not represent original work. In a sense this is true; but, on the other hand, how many painters would have been condemned to oblivion but for the faithful yet independent and brilliant art of the engravers? Take an original drawing of the period and compare it with the engraving, say, by J. R. Smith. Who can deny that Smith at least—and he did not stand alone—was an artist in the truest and best sense, conveying with fidelity the whole life and meaning of the picture, and yet placing the indelible impress of his own artistic temperament upon his task, making the print

a true work of art, one too which remains to-day as full of life, subtlety, and color as though fresh drawn from the plate, while the drawing has faded to an almost lifeless and monotonous daub.

Two things can hardly fail to strike a collector of fine prints of the early English school. The first is the recollection that the years 1770-1815 synchronized with the fiercest wars and most violent political commotions of our modern history, yet that there is hardly a sign or echo of war or tumult in the artistic record of the age. Hardly a tragedy, here and there a battle-piece, but never a sign of national passion: pathos, yes; but while the tempests raged outside the artists pursued the even tenor of their way, secure in their island fastness, as though murder and sudden death, defeats, rebellions, and treacheries were things that did not exist. And the second point is that all this great galaxy of talent, this consummate good taste and almost perfect sense of the beautiful and dignified in art, sprang exclusively from the lower classes of provincial England. Except Peters and Wilson, Lavinia Bingham and Lady Diana Beauclerk,—the two latter, thanks to the engravings of Gillray and Tomkins,—hardly a single man or woman of gentle birth contributed a jot to the revival which brought to British art such universal, well-merited, and undying fame. Let rich men and social magnates recall the fact that it is almost exclusively as patrons that a few gentlefolk have succeeded in entwining their names with the immortals. Admiral Keppel by taking Reynolds to Italy as his guest; Sir George Beaumont by aiding Constable; Sir Thomas Dyke Acland by recognizing the merit of Samuel Cousins and furthering his career. These and other patrons will be remembered so long as the story of British art is told, thanks

to acts of generosity which may have appeared to them at the time as scarcely deserving of mention in their diaries.

Whether we take the artists who designed or the engravers who translated and popularized their works with such fine art and superb technique, we find that nine-tenths from first to last were not only self-made but for the greater part self-taught. Reynolds, whose father was teacher in a small grammar-school; Gainsborough, son of a clothier; Lawrence and Woollett, sons of publicans; Hoppner, the White-chapel choir-boy; Constable, the handsome miller; Romney, one of eleven children of a cabinet-maker; Morland, son of a bankrupt picture-dealer; Wheatley, a tailor's son,—all these and many others started in life and practiced for long under conditions which seemed ill-calculated to promise the brilliant results which one and all

achieved. It was a popular movement, and it was native genius that triumphed in nature study, expressing itself in the highest terms of art. I know nothing to equal it, unless it be the success in other paths of glory that the sons of hairdressers, bandits, and smugglers were winning under the First Empire at the same moment for the future marshals of France.

To-day the devotees of art are drawn from all classes, and we see them leave our shores in throngs to study in Paris, Rome, Berlin,—here, there, and everywhere save in our own fields and lanes and cities, which provided adequate inspiration for our great masters. Yet all this forced hatching of art by foreign incubation has not given us a Reynolds, a Gainsborough, or a Romney, and until nature study occupies a higher place in the world of art I am disposed to think it never will.

Blackwood's Magazine.

MEMORIES OF MY CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL DAYS.*

BY EDMONDO DE AMICIS.

XVII. THE DRAMATIC ACTOR.

That year patriotic poetry invaded the theatre, and, after the operatic season was over and had been followed by the dramatic, hardly a week passed without the leading actor's receiving frenzied applause for the recital of some poem of national import. And thus it happened that I too was stung by the gad-fly of histrionic ambition. Once I had believed myself to be a painter born, then a tenor, now for a while I fancied myself destined to a dramatic career. This delusion was the more pardonable because, though I had no singing voice, in declaiming

I had almost too much and was never niggardly in its use. Those who were witness to my enthusiasm must have wished that I had been born aphonous. I chose by preference those tragic passages which demanded most lung-power, and more especially those in which the personage goes mad;—as, for example, the soliloquies of Saul and that in the last act of *Aristodemo* where I could thunder my loudest. The delirium of kings was "my specialty" as they say now-a-days. Of course I made a fool of myself. Several of my school-fellows and I, all victims of the same disease, used to meet, all through that autumn, at the house, now of one, now of another, of our number and

*Translated for *The Living Age*

Howl together. Other gathering-places were the rocky beds of shrunken streams, where the stones, luckily for us, could not arise and fly. But the theatre in which we most delighted, because there we could bray to our hearts' content, unheard, was wonderfully well adapted to our form of art. This was a stable at the further end of the court-yard at my house, where the tobaccoists of the neighboring villages used to bait their mules and horses. Unlucky Alder! And ill-fated Berchet! For we were given also to the spouting of lyric compositions. Honestly and truly I believed that I was destined to a great career as a tragedian. And the maddest notions buzzed in my brain:—to display my declamatory powers in the Municipal Theatre; to leave school and join some dramatic company; myself to organize, together with my four howling comrades, an exclusively male company, and induce "some capitalists" to build us a theatre. It would indeed have been strange if among so many idiotic ideas it had not occurred to me to write a play, and of course I did so. I do not recall its theme, only that it was a bloody drama and that I intended the part of the protagonist for myself, a condition *sine qua non* which I was resolved to impose on any manager who should desire to bring out the play. One feature in the case has, I believe, no parallel in the whole history of dramatic art. Before sitting down to write my play, I made out its poster, with characters a yard long on a gigantic sheet of wrapping-paper, so that I could have some idea of the effect it would produce on the boardings; and I practiced the emission of cries of despair and terror which were to be worked in—I did not as yet in the least know how—to certain scenes. Furthermore (I wish to be perfectly candid), I frequently rehearsed the manner in which I would advance to the footlights, and

the bearing at once modest and dignified with which I would acknowledge the clamorous enthusiasm of the audience. In short, all my preparations were complete: one accessory alone remained, that of writing the play. The ardor of the dramaturge waned: not so that of the actor. My ranting and my dramatic self-conceit lasted till the beginning of the next school year. But the first frosts and the first school tasks somehow or other cleared my mind for ever of the folly of elocution and thus preserved Ernesto Rossi and Tommaso Salvini from a discredited old age.

XVIII. NEW FRIENDSHIPS AND NEW DREAMS.

I had a pleasant surprise on the first morning of my entry into the class of Rhetoric. As he called the roll of the pupils the professor pronounced a name which caused us all to turn with eager curiosity toward the boy addressed:—Angelo Brofferio. The professor asked him if he was the son of Brofferio the deputy: he said he was. We were all impressed by his striking likeness to his father, whose appearance we knew from photographs and still better from the frequent caricatures of him in the *Fischietto* and *Pasquino*: their profiles were precisely the same. The son's head was unusually large, and appeared even larger by contrast with his diminutive body: his long face was manly both in feature and expression; his eyes were brown and his finely-cut mouth wore a smile of kindly cynicism. From the first he showed himself to be open and alert in character, a ready speaker, with something of the lawyer in gesture and intonation; most companionable, arrogating nothing to himself because of the fame of his father, who then enjoyed great popularity, especially in Piedmontese songs. These were sung through the streets and in the *cafés*

and we all knew them by heart. At the close of that course, he went to complete his studies elsewhere and I heard no more of him for thirty years. Then, being at the time, if I am not mistaken, professor of Philosophy at Milan, he published a learned and brilliant book on Spiritualism, which aroused much talk. I remember that, though he was strong on the literary side he had also an especial aptitude for mathematics. And I flattered myself that year, during which we studied Algebra, that I too had a gift that way. My father had had the happy thought of sending me during vacation to take Algebra lessons of a surveyor of his acquaintance, so I had already a smattering of knowledge when I entered upon the course, thanks to which I had made a creditable show at the blackboard during the first months and escaped the onslaughts of the professor. This was enough to make me believe that my bump of Mathematics had suddenly swollen; and so strong was my conviction that I had the audacity to found a bi-weekly publication—the edition was limited, consisting of a single manuscript copy—in which I elucidated our lessons for the benefit of the professor's victims. But this illusion was of even briefer duration than my others had been, for during vacation I had only studied up to the extraction of cubic roots; wherefore, when we reached this point on the programme I found myself once more on a level with the others and began once more to be harried, like the rest. Simultaneously my periodical ceased to appear; but all the same I still advise all fathers to have their sons coached during summer vacation in the most difficult studies of the next scholastic year, because even the slightest preparation is of great assistance in keeping them from falling hopelessly behind at the outset.

But even from the study of Algebra

I had over many things to distract me that year. Boyhood was passing, already I was a man in stature, day by day I enlarged the circle of my acquaintance, and the new friendships I contracted were much more dangerous than the others had been, because they were found outside the school circle. The first and warmest of these were in the army. At that time there were volunteers among the *bersaglieri*, and even among the conscripts many youths of good family,—students who had left college, some who had already gained their degree, actors, artists and the like, all men of some cultivation and all inflamed with a patriotic enthusiasm which gave a certain nobility of aim to the least stable among them. If you got hold of one of these, the others followed like a cluster of cherries. With them I first knew the pleasure and pride of manly friendships:—I concealed from them my age of thirteen years; I gave myself the airs of a student expert in the ways of the world. I was delighted to be seen walking in their company, my arm thrust through a military sleeve, the brim of my hat caressed by the flutterings of a huge plume, and I fancied I was doing something excessively fast if I stayed with them for half an hour in front of a *café* after the theatre, and that the passers-by must be saying,—“Who knows how that scamp spends his nights?” I remember one of those evenings with especial clearness because I was then introduced by a sergeant to a handsome young man, tall and of distinguished bearing, an employé in the Quartermaster's department, Ugo Igino Tarchetti by name. This was the future author of *Drammi della Vita Militare* and of *Tosca*: a strong but pessimistic poet, destined to die in the flower of his age before he had taken more than a sip at the cup of glory. Who could then have predicted that ten years later I should write a

book in direct opposition to one of his, that we should be repeatedly described as antagonists, and that, having considered him an enemy while he lived, I should love him, when dead, like a brother?

I was now entering upon that brief period which corresponds in boys to the time when girls begin to lace tightly and put flowers in their hair; the period during which the looking-glass is the most important piece of furniture in the house. Though I am in the vein of confession, I do not dare to specify the heights of absurdity which I attained during that phase of the moon, how much time I used to spend in tying my cravat, how often I returned to give my hat a final tilt before the glass, or e'er I left the house; my reckless waste of the pomades and perfumes belonging to my sisters; the tortures I suffered in St. Crispin's prison in order to show an aristocratic foot! Many fathers and mothers when their sons become a prey to this passion think to find a remedy in ridicule and make fun of them from morning to night. This is a folly which my parents never committed, understanding the malady in question as something incident to the boy's age, a sort of rash. They pretended to notice nothing, barely exchanging a discreet smile when I asked for a new necktie or a pair of kid shoes,—a smile which did not escape me. And I applaud them to-day for their indulgence, to which chiefly I am indebted for the very brief duration of a malady which would have been much aggravated had they made sport of me. It was not by prinking and daily baths of cologne that I had aimed at securing the good graces of my friends, the *bersaglieri*. I had arrived at that higher order of platonic attachments, which led me to promenade under windows, to the stealthy dogging of light footsteps and to ecstatic star-

ing from the stalls of the theatre. These were sudden "smashes," fond but fleeting, not seldom coming two or even three at a time. I became an easy prey to the most senseless illusions, gloated for weeks over a chance look, or a smile which probably spoke rather of mockery than fondness, and I revelled in that sweet sorrow and bitter sadness about which I had read in books. What an actor I was! It is no slight task for me to recall all the adventures of my imagination during that year of ferment. I had more love-affairs than Don Juan Tenorio and Luis Mendia put together. My heart found room for more beauties than the imperial harem on the Bosphorus. I sighed for beloved objects of every grade; one week it was the Prefect's daughter, the next the Professor's wife; to the leading lady succeeded the star of the ballet; to the governess in a gentleman's family, the widow of an army colonel. Beside my adorations of the street and the theatre, there were those which overtook me at home. When the ladies who came to call on my mother were handsome, I no longer fled as of yore to the court-yard to escape the ennui of their customary discourse, I sat there, bolt upright upon a chair, and listened to the chatter of the visitor, with eyes like gig-lamps and the rigidity of one hypnotized. I had an especial weakness for married women, above all for such as put the greater part of their husbands' incomes upon their backs. If I had been forced to fight a duel each time my fancy was thus engaged, I should have had an average of one a week; and before I graduated from the *Gymnasium* I should have been riddled with bullet-holes. These fleeting fancies of my brain—not my heart—were so ardent that they often caused me conscientious scruples as though they had been veritably sinful; at times I deemed myself a dissolute,

lawless debauchee, a base intriguer, and the scandal of honest folk; one who had nothing to lose in the way of reputation. Yet all the same I was secretly proud of myself and fancied that only by deep inner experiences like those I had passed through, is one qualified to call oneself a man.

The man in question, however, was only an elongated baby who could still amuse himself by the hour together with all the surviving toys of his babyhood—dolls, tops, glass baubles, and even paper birds. I chose retired spots for these recreations and if any of the family caught me in the act, I hastened to tuck my toys away and made a shame-faced pretence of having been moved to review these childish possessions by the curiosity of a philosopher given to meditations on his own past. But now that I know the world and life, I am not at all ashamed to confess that this passion for toys attacked me at intervals till I was nearly thirty, and that after I had been guilty of several books, I passed many a delightful half hour making those wooden frogs which have a twisted thread underneath, and jump about on the table. Even now, when I pass before a toy shop, I sometimes feel strangely tempted, and why should I blush to own it? Men are but children of a larger growth who ordinarily conceal their childishness under a mask of gravity, which they gladly abandon whenever they feel sure of not being found out. Moreover, to weave visions, as we all do, of things strange and impossible, but ardently desired, is but toying with ideas and images. The author who intersperses his manuscript with sketches or covers his margins with whirligigs is playing like a child, and so is the Minister of State who in his leisure moments folds and refolds in a dozen different shapes his morning paper or beats a tattoo on his desk with his pa-

per-knife, as was Count Cavour's habit during the speeches of long-winded deputies. It is my opinion that if the most serious man on earth were to be locked up in an empty room with a box of tin soldiers the moment would come when he would take them out, range them in order and make them manœuvre like any boy of six. This persistent love of toys, diverted my mind to some extent from my love-affairs and acted as a very salutary sedative. Ah, could one of the many dames for whose behoof I made sheep's eyes and assumed troubadour poses in the theatre have beheld me on one of those mornings which I spent rolling along the table rows of nuts, upon some of which I had pasted bits of gilt paper, to represent the staff of either army then fighting in Lombardy, what a burst of silvery laughter I should have received full in the face and what a smart tap of the parasol, perhaps, upon the back of my neck! But let mothers beware how they make sport of their tall boys when they see them occupied with toys which they might presumably have outgrown had they been gifted with ordinary intelligence. It is rather a sign of singleness of mind and a lively fancy:—of the power to create an imaginary world, and people it with delightful impersonations; and these are qualities which may afford the child great solace in his maturer years; providing him with a refuge in his own mind from the pressure of painful realities, keeping alight the fire of youth and preserving intact those fond illusions, without which, life would inevitably become with the majority of men a constant desire for death.

This academic year was, however, to afford me a distraction from my studies far more potent than either my friends the *bersaglieri* or my own unrequited affections had proved. Even as Victor Emmanuel had dealt a death-

blow to my Latin in 1859, so Garibaldi became in 1860 the mortal foe of my Greek, for a knowledge of that language having been found essential to the speedy enfranchisement of Italy, it was first introduced into the Gymnasium course, in that same year.

But the departure of the "Thousand" from Quarto might have been a signal agreed upon by Garibaldi and us scholars for ceasing to trouble our brains about text-books. They left for Sicily in crowds, youths of every rank and station, even some who had been public laughing-stocks, like a certain little hunchbacked tailor, with legs which bowed out like two slices of melon, who, I remember, was greeted on his departure by a tempest of laughter and applause. With the war of 1860 a new bee began buzzing in my bonnet; I became a politician. My greatest friends, at that time, were two school-mates of revolutionary principles, one because he was son of a famous Mazzinian; the other because he was an instinctive rebel against all authority, from Xenophon down. My father was a monarchist, and I was naturally far from a radical, but I had gradually become such through the daily perusal of the *Diritto*, to which my father's literary tastes had led him to become a subscriber. Being, all three of us, fanatical devotees of Garibaldi we planned a clandestine evasion that we might "fly to his assistance." How our attempt failed I have told in another place, but the fiasco only inflamed our patriotic ardor. We became the implacable enemies of Cavour, who "frustrated the attempt of Garibaldi by the wily arts of a pusillanimous policy";—a phrase which pleased us immensely. The cession of Nice and Savoy to France drove us out of our senses with wrath. In all our conversations we made mincemeat of the unlucky minister. We read his speeches in the papers with a smile

of bitter sarcasm. We likewise were in the habit of treating as he deserved, "Napoleon the Little," with whom we were intimately acquainted, thanks to the diatribes of Victor Hugo. Concerning both these men we held furious discussions with our "moderate" school-fellows, who were wont to accuse us of "putting a spoke in the wheels of governmental policy." To which the three of us would reply in chorus, "Even so! We propose to resist the Count of Cavour with all our might:—to grant him no truce. We want nothing of his policy of servitude to the stranger. He who is not with us, is against Italy." Later, when La Farina went to take up arms in Sicily, we really sinned against light and, imagining that a gauntlet had been thrown down before the man who had sold Nice and Savoy, we talked of founding a paper to "finish" him. I remember how I used to rage at the opinion of Garibaldi expressed by certain old Cavour-mad officials who came to our house. Among the rest there was an Inspector of something or other, a hoary-headed giant who talked with an insupportable drawl as though at each word which dropped from his mouth a dollar would leak out of his purse. When I heard this man speak of Garibaldi as the "marplot of the policy of Turin," an "importunate disturber of the peace of the world," sent among us for our bitter discipline; when I heard him conclude with his customary phrase, at which my father used to shrug his shoulders,—“He will give us rope to twist! You will see! You will see!” then would I shoot glances of enmity at the man which should have pierced him through and through. The acute stage of my Garibaldian fever lasted until the General's return to Caprera. What happened to our studies during the latter months of that scholastic year may be imagined. They went the way of the

King of Naples. But I fancy that anyone was sure of promotion at that glorious period who shouted "*Viva l'Italia!*" and even I got my grade. A few days after the examination as I passed through an alley-way near my home I saw a crowd of women gathered about the door of a haberdasher's shop, whose proprietress was sitting with her elbows on her knees and her head between her hands, weeping as

though her heart would break. To my question one of the women answered, "They have murdered her son at *Milass.*" My first feeling was one of pity, my next, I am glad to say, of shame. I heard an inner voice which said to me, "This man fought and died, while for three months you have done nothing but rant, idiot that you are!" And after that day I modified my vocabulary about Cavour.

Nuova Antologia.

(To be continued.)

THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. MAGNUS.

You would hardly expect to find an ancient cathedral up in those Orkney islands that one usually sees huddled away in a spare corner of the map and made to look even smaller than they are by the exigencies of space. Drawn to half scale they seem like the fragments of a bursting shell scattered about an ocean which not so very many degrees higher becomes the empty Arctic. It is curious to think of: once, long ago, strange ships with monstrous figure-heads and painted sides, full of the Northern actors of history, crawled with their lines of oars into the sounds and bays of these islands, till for centuries they became the stage for dramatic events and stirring personages. Some of the players bore names that any history-book tells of. Harald Hardrada, old King Haco, Bothwell, and Montrose have all played their parts. And there are others, earls, and prelates, and Northern kings, and old searovers, who were really far better worth knowing than half the puppets with more familiar labels. Then, gradually, the lights went out and the audience turned away to look at other things, and the Orkneymen were left to observe the Sabbath and elect a County Council. One by one the old

buildings toppled down and the old names changed and the old customs faded, till the place of the islands in history became their place upon the map; but time and man have spared one thing,—this old cathedral church of St. Magnus in Kirkwall.

On the ancient houses of the little borough and the winding slit of a street the old red church still looks down benignly, and sometimes (of a Sunday I think especially) a little humorously. Over the grey roofs and the tree-tops in sheltered gardens and the black mites of people passing on their business, its lustreless Gothic eyes see a wide expanse of land and a wider and brighter sweep of sea. The winding sounds and broadening bays join and divide and join again, through and through its island dominions. Backwards and forwards, twice a day, the flood tide pours from the open Atlantic, and each channel becomes an eastward flowing river, and then from the North Sea the ebb sets the races running to the west. Everywhere is the sight or the sound of the sea; rollers on the western cliffs, salt currents among the islands, quiet bays lapping the feet of heathery hills. Out of the two great oceans the wind blows like

the blasts of an enormous bellows, and on the horizon the clouds are eternally gathering.

It is over this land of moor and water and vapor that the cathedral watches the people; and though from the difficulty of passing through so narrow a street it has never moved from the spot where it first arose, and never seen, one would suppose, the greater part of its territories, yet it knows,—none better—the stories and the spirit of all the islands. Crows and gulls cruise round the tower familiarly and perhaps bring gossip, but eyes so long and narrow, and of so inhuman an anatomy, may very likely see through a hill or a heart for themselves.

The country is like a fleet at sea, and the old spirit of the people came from the deep. At first it was only restless and fierce and free; in time it began to think and at odd moments to be troubled, and they called it pious. Then it looked for a fitting house where it might live when it could no longer find a home in the people. So it built the red cathedral, and there it silently dwells to-day.

There is something in their church none of the respectable townsfolk have the slightest suspicion of, something alive that vibrates to the cry of the wind and the breaking over the sea and the little human events that happen in the crow-stepped houses.

On the wild autumn afternoons when the hard north-east wind is driving rain and sleet through the town, the old church begins to remember. The wind and the sleet coming over the sea stir the quick spirit so sharply that every angle is full of sighing noises. As the shortened day draws to an end, and lights begin to twinkle in the town, and the showers become less frequent, and the clouds are rolled up and gathered off the sky, then the people come out into the streets and see the early

stars above the gable-ends and high cathedral tower. They think it cold and walk quickly, but a personage of sandstone takes little note of the temperature. The cathedral merely feels refreshed.

When the clear windy night draws in the people go to rest, and one by one the lights are put out till only the stars and the lighthouses are left. Looking over a darkened town and an empty night, with the air moving fresh from Norway, the memories come thick upon the old church which shelters so many bones. It is like digging up the soil of those lands from which the sea has for centuries receded, and where the ribs of ships and the skeletons of sailors lie deep beneath the furrows of the plough.

Kirkwall must have been a strange little town before the cathedral's memory begins, when there was no red tower above the narrow street and the little houses, in the days when Rognvald the son of Kol had vowed to dedicate a splendid minster to his uncle Saint Magnus, should he come by his own and call himself Earl of Orkney; and when the islanders waited to see what aid the blessed saint would furnish to this enterprise.

It is one of the island tragedies,—the saga of how the evil Earl Hakon slew his cousin Earl Magnus outside the old church of Egilsay with that high round tower that you can see over Kirkwall bay from the cathedral parapet; and how the grass grew greener where he fell, and miracles multiplied, and they made him a saint in time.

Though all these events happened before a stone of the cathedral was laid, they may help to give the meaning of its story, and on that account they are worth, perhaps, a rough telling here. Earl Hakon had died, and his son Paul ruled in his stead. He was a silent, brave, unlucky man, upright and honorable in his dealings,

but the shadow of his father's crime lay over the land. It brought old age and prosperity and repentance to the doer of the deed; on his son the punishment fell.

Rognvald claimed the half of the earldom. Paul answered that there was no need for long words, "For I will guard the Orkneys while God grants me life so to do." And then the contest began. Rognvald attacked from north and south: Paul vanquished the southern fleet and hurrying north drove his rival back to Norway; and so the winter came on and the peace that in those days men kept in winter.

All had gone well with Paul, but his luck was to change with a little thing. He was keeping Yule with his friends and kinsmen, when, upon a winter's evening, a man, wet with the spray of the Pentland Firth, came out of the dusk and knocked upon the door. He was hardly the instrument, one would think, a departed saint would choose to build a cathedral with, a viking with his sword ever loose in its sheath, and his lucky star obscured, coming here for refuge from the ashes of his father and his home. He was known as Swein Asleifson (a name to be famous in the islands) and welcomed for his family's sake; they brought him in to the feast, and the drinking went on. In a little while there arose a quarrel over the cups; Swein killed his man and fled out into the night again. He was a landless outlaw this time, for the dead man had been high in favor and the Earl was stern. Meanwhile men went on drinking over the hall fires, but Paul's luck had departed, and Saint Magnus had a weapon to his hand. In the spring the war began again, and suddenly in the midst of it Earl Paul disappeared, his body-guard cut down upon the beach, himself spirited clean away. Swein Asleifson had come for him and carried him to a fate that was never more than rumored.

So Rognvald won the earldom, and the first stones of his church were laid. The Saint had certainly struck for him.

That is the true story of the vow and the building of the cathedral, a tale too old for even the venerable church to remember. But all the long history of the seven centuries since it knows, and indeed it has played such a part in scene after scene and act after act, that a memory would have to be of some poorer stuff than hewed sandstone to forget a past so stirring. And who can be so far behind every scene as the house which during men's lives listens to their prayers, and at last upon a day takes them in for ever?

When it first began to look down from its windows upon those men going about their business in the sunshine or the rain, it saw among the little creatures some that were well worth remembering, though there be few but the cathedral to remember them now. There was Rognvald himself, that cheerful, gallant Earl who made poetry and war, and sailed to Jerusalem with all his chiefs and friends, fighting and rhyming on the way, and riding home across the length of Europe, and who, when he fell by an assassin's hand, was laid at last beneath the pavement of this cathedral he had founded. And then, most memorable of all the great Odallers who followed him in war and sat at his Yule feasts, there was the viking Swein Asleifson, he who kidnapped Paul and afterwards became the lifelong and, on the whole, faithful friend of Rognvald, and the faithless enemy of almost everyone else; the most daring, unscrupulous, famous and, judging by the way he always obtained forgiveness when he needed it, the most fascinating man in all the northern countries. He was the luckiest, too, till the day he fell in an ambush in the streets of Dublin, exclaiming with his last breath, in most remark-

able contrast to the tenor of his life: "Know this, all men, that I am one of the Saint Earl Rognvald's body-guard, and I now mean to put my trust in being where he is, with God." May he rest in peace, wherever his bones lie, even though his reformation came something late, the turbulent, terrible old viking, whom the saga-writers called the last of that profession.

The generation who built it had passed away, when on a summer's day, after it had weathered nearly a century of storm and shine, the cathedral saw the greatest sight it had yet beheld. Haco of Norway had come with his fleet to reconquer the western isles of Scotland, the Norse kings' old inheritance. The pointed windows watched ship after ship sail by with colored sails and shining shields, bearing the Norsemen to their last battle in southern lands; and then the islands waited for the news that in those days was brought by the men who had made the story.

Month upon month went by; men wondered and rumors flew; the days grew shorter and the gales came out of all the seas. At last, when winter was well upon the islands, what were left of the battered ships began to straggle home. They brought back stories that the cathedral remembers, though six centuries have rolled them out of the memories of the people; tales of lee-shores and westerly gales, of anchors dragging under the Cumbraes, and Scottish knights charging down upon the beach where the Norwegian spears were ranked on the edge of the tide. Then of more gales and whirlpools in the Pentland, until at length they carried their old sick king ashore to die in the bishop's palace at Kirkwall.

He lay for two months in that ancient building, now a roofless shell, standing just beyond the churchyard wall, his most faithful friends beside

him, the restless Orkney wind without, and the voice of the saga-reader by the bed. First they read to him in Latin till he grew too sick to follow the foreign words, and then in Norse, through the sagas of the saints, and after of the kings. They had come down to his own father Sverrir, and then in the words of the old historian: "Near midnight Sverrir's saga was read through, and just as midnight was past, Almighty God called King Haco from this world's life." They buried him in the great red church that had stood sentinel over the sick chamber, and as the race of vikings died with Swein, so the roving, conquering kings of Norway passed away with Haco, and never again came south to trouble the sea-boards.

The Orkneys, however, were not yet out of the current of affairs. They cut, indeed, but a small figure compared with the Orkney of the great Earl Thorfinn in the century before Rognvald founded his cathedral, he who owned nine earldoms in Scotland and all the southern isles, besides a great realm in Ireland. But there was still a bishop in the palace, and an earl with powers of life and death in his dominion, and an armed following that counted for something in war; and the cathedral was still the church of a small country rather than of a little county. The sun cast the shadows of dignitaries in the winding street, and the bones they were framed of were laid in time beneath the flags of St. Magnus's Church. When one comes to think of it, the old cathedral must hold a varied collection of these, for here lie the high and low of two races and no man knows how many chance sojourners and travellers.

At last upon a dark day for the islands, their era of semi-independence and vikingism and Norse romance came to a most undignified end. A needy king of the North pledged them

to Scotland for his daughter's dowry, as a common man might pledge his watch. East to Norway was no longer the way to the motherland, and the open horizon meeting the clouds, the old high road, led now to a foreign shore. Henceforth they belonged to the long coast, with its pale mountain-peaks far away over the cliffs, which had once, so far as the eye could see, belonged to them. It was a transaction intended for a season, but the season has never run to its limit yet. Now, it is to be hoped it never will; but for centuries it would have been better for the Orkneys if they had gone the way of some volcanic islet and sunk quietly below the grey North Sea.

One might think that, when they had ceased to be a half-way house between their sovereign and his neighbors of Europe, and were become instead a geographical term applied to the least accessible portion of their new lord's dominions, that their history and their troubles would soon have ceased, and the islanders been left to fish, and reap late crops and try to keep the winter weather out. But there was no such good luck for many a day to come. Alas for themselves! they were too valuable an asset in the Scotch king's treasury. Orkney too valuable! That collection of windy, treeless islands, where great ponds of rain-water stand through the fields for months together, and a strawberry that ripens is shown to one's friends. The plain truth is that, measured by a Scotch standard of value in those days, it would have been hard to find a pocket not worth the picking. The rental of Orkney was more than twice that of the kingdom of Fife, and Fife, I suppose, was an El Dorado compared with most provinces of its impecunious country. So north they came, Scotch earls and bishops and younger sons, to make what they could before the pledge was re-

deemed. And to the old cathedral was flung the shame of standing as the symbol of oppression. It was not its fault, and every stone must have silently cried to Heaven for forgiveness. But a cathedral meant a bishop, and an Orkney bishop meant the refinement of roguery and exaction. When these prelates in their turns came to permanently inhabit their minster, and they could at last hear the voice of its spirit that loves the land it watches, demanding an account of their stewardship, what should they say? The old excuse, "We must live"? I can hardly think the church perceived the necessity.

That monument which the old sailors and fighters of the North had built that they might link a better world with the rough and warring earth, had to stand immovable for century upon century, watching the trouble of their sons. It saw them make their stand at Summerdale in the old fashion, with sword and halbert, and a battle-cry on their lips, and march back again to the town in a glimpse of triumph. But that quickly faded, and the weight of new laws and evil rulers gradually broke the high spirit entirely. It saw the proud Odallers reduced to long-suffering "peerie lairds," and all their power and romance and circumstance of state pass over to the foreigner; until after a time it was hard to believe that some pages further back there was a closed chapter of history which read quite differently from this.

Down below the parapet of the tower the narrow streets were full of the most splendid-looking people, all in steel and the Stuart arms,—well bar sinistered if their heraldry was accurate. Earls Robert and Patrick of that royal name, each, through his scandalous life, made the island the home of a prince's court; and out among the moors and the islands the old race wondered whose turn it should be for

persecution next, and how long Heaven would let these things be.

The downfall of the Stuarts' rule came at last, violently as was fit, but to the end they used the old church on behalf of the wrong. The tower was wrapped in the smoke of the rebels' musketry when old Earl Patrick lay by the heels in Edinburgh awaiting his doom as a traitor, and his son held Kirkwall against what might, by comparison, be termed the Law, and it was only at the point of the pike that they turned the last Stuart out of the sepulchre of St. Magnus.

Then the long windows watched the shadows of all manner of persons, who are well forgotten now, darken the prospect for a while, and pass away to let other clouds gather; and in all that time there cannot have been many whom a critical edifice can recall with pride.

The bishops were sent about their business and the solemn League and Covenant as solemnly sworn. The troopers of Cromwell stalked through the old pillars with their wide hats the firmer set on. The Covenant was unsworn, and the bishops came back and acquired emoluments for a little while longer, till at last they went altogether, and in good, sober Presbyterian fashion the awakened people set about purifying their temple. Poor old church! they did it thoroughly. Away went carving and stained glass, and ancient tombs and bones, and everything that the austere taste of Heaven is supposed by man to dislike. They made it clean with a kind of yellowish whitewash, and divided it by a sanitary deal screen impervious to draught. In this shameful guise, more like a human sinner penitent during his Majesty's pleasure than the symbol of God

on earth, the cathedral has watched the advent of quiet days and the slow healing of time. To-day the greatest clamor it hears is made by the rooks. No earl's men or bishop's men quarrel in the street; no one either fears or harries the islanders; the history of Orkney is written and closed and laid upon the shelf. The hands of the clock move evenly round, and the seasons change by the almanack.

But there stands the old red church, silently remembering and arranging in their due perspective all these things, remarkable and true. The worst of it is that it makes no comment that a mortal can understand, so that no one can say what a seasoned, well-mortared observer of seven centuries of affairs thinks of changing dynasties and creeds, and whether it is disposed to take them more seriously than so many moultings of feathers, and if one can retain any optimism through a course of whitewash and draught-proof screens.

It is pleasant to think, for the old minster's sake, that it heeds the rubs of fortune very little, and regards material changes just as so many shifts of plumage. Its people are still flesh and blood and its islands rock and turf and heather, and it will take more than pails and paint-brushes, and pledges and Covenants, to make them otherwise. The winter days are as bleak as ever, and the summer evenings as long and light, and the sun rises out of the North Sea among the flat green islands, and sinks in the Atlantic behind the western heather hills; and it is likely enough that from the height of the cathedral tower many other most serious events look surprisingly unimportant.

J. Storer Clouston.

THE WERE-WOLF.

"If there is any mercy in the heart of the English lord, let him come quickly to succor his oppressed servants; he shall become the instrument of Heaven to rid the earth of an incumbrance, and his servants at Ryábova of a deadly peril."

Thus ran a portion of a certain notable letter received at St. Petersburg by Johnnie Baxter, English merchant of that city and lessee of the shooting district upon which the writer lived as head keeper. Johnnie was not a lord, but Ivan, the keeper, chose to call him so whensoever he considered that there was reasonable prospect of a tip, or that any other advantage was to be gained by the employment of flattering language or (as Johnnie expressed it) "butter."

"What do you suppose is the matter?" asked Johnnie, taking counsel of his fellow-sportsman at the club during the luncheon hour; "poachers?"

"That, or a bear among the rye-fields," said Griffiths; "you'll have to go, Baxter; you can send for me if there's a good thing on."

Baxter lost no time in journeying down to his "shoot"; he was somewhat curious to learn what this terror might be from which he was expected to deliver "his servants." It was early spring and the roads were in a shocking state. Has the reader ever abandoned his body to the mercilessness of a Russian road in spring? If not, stay at home, and keep your bones in the positions selected for them by a wise and beneficent nature. That Russian road in spring would shake them all into your boots, and you would require to have them resorted and fastened together if you ever arrived at your destination, which would be doubtful.

Baxter, however, being a sturdy Brit-

on and strongly put together, arrived safely at the shooting-lodge, where he found Ivan, the keeper, and Spiridon, his assistant, awaiting him with solemn faces.

Johnnie Baxter required a little cheering after his terrible journey, and his conversation with Ivan did him infinite good.

Ivan was, as I have said, solemn; his demeanor was one of studied mystery; he spoke as one who has the most weighty communication to make, yet fears to utter it lest its importance should instantly crush the recipient.

"Well, Ivan, what's up?" Baxter asked, cheerily.

"A terrible calamity has befallen the district," said the keeper; then he waited a moment to note the effect of this remark upon Baxter, who merely smiled blandly. Ivan continued: "You may have seen Timothy Harkof, my lord, the cowherd?"

"I know the tipsy old idiot," replied Baxter, with levity. "What of him?"

"He's dead," said Ivan, solemnly.

"Good gracious, man, you didn't send for me to tell me the cowherd was dead?" exclaimed Baxter, somewhat hotly.

"That is not all," said Ivan, undisturbed. "He defied the wood spirits; he declared in his cups that he believed in no *Liéshui* or any other wood spirits, and that he would go and dance at midnight in the open space in mid-forest which is held sacred to them. Well, he went, and—" Ivan paused.

"Go on," said Johnnie, rather interested.

"I hardly dare speak of it," continued Ivan, glancing at the dark night brooding without the uncurtained windows. The assistant, Spiridon, glanced out also, and shuddered. Johnnie Bax-

ter silently poured out a glass of sherry for each man; both keepers drank with satisfaction, sighed, and set down their glasses empty.

"He never reappeared," continued Ivan, after a slight pause—"not in human form, that is. Without doubt the Liéshul killed him. His soul—"

"Never mind his soul," said Baxter, testily, "that is not your affair, fortunately. What has this poor fellow's disappearance or death to do with the disaster you declare to have happened in the village?"

"His soul is the whole point," said Ivan, looking a little offended; "do you not know, my lord, that when a man has insulted the Liéshul he is condemned by them to inhabit the body of a wolf, which thenceforward becomes a were-wolf—a terror and a pest to all who dwell within the area of its pernicious hunting-field? We are accursed, my lord, for this man Timothy's sins. Save us, my lord, if you have any pity for your servants!"

Ivan dropped upon his knees and seized Johnnie's hand as though to kiss it. Spiridon dropped also, evidently intending to claim his turn in the kissing; both men showed signs of weeping, and knelt a moment or two, crossing themselves piously and sniffing, after Baxter had testily drawn away his hand.

"You fools," said Johnnie; "do you seriously tell me that you believe this nonsense? If there is a wolf about, I will shoot him with pleasure, if I can find him, but let's have an end of this superstitious foolery. Has this wolf been seen?"

"Many times," said Ivan, somewhat abashed, but distinctly unshaken. "Moreover, I have here a list of the damage the accursed beast has already done in the district."

Ivan handed in a dirty slip of paper covered with totally illegible hieroglyphics.

"Read it out," said Johnnie, after a strenuous but ineffectual attempt to decipher the document.

Ivan did so, when it appeared that beyond frightening several peasant women and a man or two and killing an unfortunate child of five, the principal offences of the were-wolf had been of a burglarious nature.

"Three lambs from Gregory Panof," Ivan read out, "on the 19th of March; Anthony Kritof's white dog on the 20th and two of his sheep on the 21st."

"Any wolf might have done that much," scoffed Johnnie.

"Let my lord wait a moment," replied Ivan, continuing. "See here: on the 23rd March there disappeared from the barn of Peter Abramof, where he had hidden it, a packet of rouble-notes; his savings for—"

"Oh, come, come, Ivan," said Baxter, laughing aloud; "the were-wolf could have no possible use for money; Petka will find his packet. The sheep and lambs and so forth are a different matter—"

"Your mercifulness has not yet heard all," said Ivan, still quite undisturbed. "The widow Katerina, who is the wise woman of the village, has lately lost her book of herbs and of charms; Gregory Panof, a light cart which he used for—"

"Why, man alive!" exclaimed Baxter, "are you absolutely mad, or have you drunk yourself into this condition of idiocy? Do you know what you are saying? Think, now. Why, in the name of wonder, should a were-wolf carry away carts, and money, and books—"

"Nevertheless, it is true, even though my lord disbelieves it," said Ivan; "my lord shall inquire of these persons for himself."

"Did they see the wolf steal the things?" asked Johnnie; "or is every rascality in the village set down to the

poor beast because some fool has declared him a were-wolf?"

"He has certainly been seen," said Ivan; "as for his being a were-wolf, there is no doubt whatever; it is the wise woman who has said it. Moreover, the brute can only be killed by bullets over which the true charm has been said. I have here six bullets," Ivan produced half-a-dozen slug-shot, "which have been carefully prepared by Katerina; it was fortunate that she remembered the were-wolf charm, even though her book was taken from her; doubtless the accursed beast was aware that only by her art he might be destroyed, and therefore, by the agency of his kinsman, the evil one, would deprive her of this power over him."

"Give me the slugs," said Johnnie. "Now then, where did you last see this wolf?"

"I have not seen him," replied the keeper, somewhat sheepishly, "but Spiridon has——"

"Oh, well, Spiridon, where was this and when?"

Spiridon cleared his throat and wiped his mouth with the back of his hand. "The accursed one chased me," he said hoarsely, "It was last Friday night; I returned from Lavick by the wood road, and he followed me roaring and foaming at the mouth: a terrible beast—standing so high," Spiridon placed his hand about five feet from the ground, "and about four paces in length from snout to root of tail."

"That's certainly a very large wolf," said Baxter, keeping his countenance with commendable self-control. "Now you can go, both of you; stay—there was mutton for my dinner to-night; take half the carcase of the sheep, with the head and offal, and lay the meat out in a convenient place in the forest, somewhere near where the brute has been seen."

"What, to-night—in the dark? Have

mercy, my lord, it is terrible to deal with the evil one after the sun has set!" said poor Ivan, haggard with fear. Spiridon looked no more comfortable than his chief.

"They say he is pretty bad to deal with even in the daylight," said Johnnie; "don't be a fool, Ivan, take a lantern if you are frightened; you used not to be such a coward; Spiridon can go with you and hold your hand; here, take my gun and put one of the blessed slugs among the rest, in case he should come and roar at you."

Ivan took the gun; then shook his head doubtfully and expectorated; then he crossed himself.

"I am not a coward, as my lord knows well," he said; "no man can hold his own against the devil."

"Then why did you send for me?" asked Johnnie pertinently. For the first time Ivan was surprised out of his air of solemn conviction.

"My lord is such a good shot," he replied, somewhat weakly, "and the wise woman having prepared the bullets, I thought——"

"Nonsense, go and set out the meat," said Baxter, "and don't be a fool; if the wolf comes, shoot him; if not, I shall spend the night there, and see if I can't get a sight of him when he comes to eat, as he is pretty sure to do. Don't drag the devil into the business, he's busy enough over his own affairs."

An hour later both keepers returned, pale and frightened. They had heard the accursed beast roaring in the forest, they declared. On careful inquiry it transpired that Spiridon had thought he heard the roaring, but that Ivan had imagined the noise to be the screeching of cranes in the marsh, a mile away.

"Look here, Ivan," asked Baxter, "do you know the call of a crane, or do you not?"

"I know what I know," said Ivan:

mysteriously, "but what I do not know is the voice of the evil one who speaks in many voices through the mouth of the were-wolf. How shall I say positively that a crane cried, when it might have been the devil himself calling to his own?"

"Well, take me to the place," said Baxter, "and if he comes to eat I shall shoot him, whether he be wolf or devil."

Baxter sat and shivered in a tree close to the sheep's offal. It was a very cold night, and though warmly clad in furs he was half frozen. Moreover the fork of a tree is not comfortable for long, even though at first it may seem almost luxurious. After an hour one doubts its real merit as a couch; after three one loathes it with great loathing; after four one would give untold sums for a nice flat stone pavement to lie upon, if only for a little while; as for the hardest bed that ever a man lay and cursed upon, one would sell one's soul for five minutes of unalloyed repose at full length upon its adamantine mattress. Sleep came, after an hour or two, and during that time his troubles were forgotten; but Johnnie was waked at length by a sound.

He did not know what awoke him, but he had that peculiar sensation that something close by had moved. He listened, breathless, but could detect nothing. Five minutes later, however, he distinctly heard the crunching of a bone, but to his surprise the sound came from a hundred yards away, and not from the spot where the meat had been laid down.

"The brute has dragged a piece away," thought Johnnie; "in order to eat it where he cannot scent me; if he is not the devil, he is about as cunning as his evil kinsman! But he'll come back for more presently, and then I shall shoot by sound."

But apparently the "accursed brute"

had taken as much as he required; he did not return.

"Did not I say he was a were-wolf?" said Ivan, upon hearing of this failure. "Why did not my lord hear him take the food? because he is a supernatural and accursed beast, and can possess himself of food or other things from a distance."

"I fell asleep," said Johnnie, simply; "don't be a fool, Ivan, we are still not too late for the morning tournament of the capercallzies; let us go out into the forest; a big cock or two will console me for my disappointment!"

Ivan shook his head dubiously. "People do not fall asleep in the boughs of trees, which are hard, unless the evil one inspires them to do so," said he.

"Have it so then," said Johnnie, "only let us make haste and get among those capercallzies!"

Now the tournament of the capercallzies is a glorious function, which however cannot be minutely described in this place, by reason of the limitation of space. Suffice to say that in Russia the old cock birds are killed in spring for this reason; their numbers preponderate over those of the hen birds, with disastrous result to the welfare of the community. Therefore the Russian sportsman sallies forth in spring and stalks the old knights as they sit high upon their pine tree mounts and challenge one another to mortal combat. So intent are they upon the business of the moment at this time that they neither see nor hear the lurking sportsman as he creeps towards them, unless he should make a false move, by advancing while the bird is resting from his challenge-song.

Johnnie Baxter had successfully stalked and killed a couple of these splendid fellows—as big as a small turkey and twice as majestic is the average capercallzie—and was busy stalking a third. The great bird sat and chattered vigorously, and Baxter crept

steadily forward, Ivan following at a distance with equal care. Step by step Johnnie gained ground, now creeping cautiously, now—when behind adequate cover—making a few long jumps towards his prey. Already he was within eighty yards of the capercallzie, which he could just make out at the top of a high pine tree, huge and indistinct in the semi-darkness of early dawn; in five minutes he would be within certain range and would send a charge of No. 1 straight for the poor unsuspecting old braggart. Then suddenly, to his surprise, Ivan, fifty yards away among the pine trees, uttered a loud yell, which seemed to modulate into a howl of terror. Away flew the capercallzie. Johnnie Baxter, as was natural and perhaps in this instance pardonable, turned and expressed his opinion in words which were forcible though not the choicest in his vocabulary. I paraphrase them:

"What," he said or implied, "induced you to yell at that critical moment, Ivan? Surely you are woodcraftsman enough to know that you should be silent during the stalking?"

"The accursed beast!" ejaculated Ivan, trembling and pointing—"the English lord stalked the capercallzie, but the were-wolf stalked *him*—oh, Heaven protect us all and save us from the just punishment of our sins!"—Ivan crossed himself and muttered prayers.

"Good Heavens, man, *where?* Where is he?" shouted Johnnie, rudely interrupting him: "Where is the wolf?"

"He was there—not fifteen paces from my lord," said Ivan. "Does my lord suppose I should be frightened if this were an ordinary beast? It was the accursed one. He was stalking my lord; I swear it is true. His eyes"—Johnnie muttered something about the wolf's eyes.

"Show me exactly where he passed," he said aloud; "quickly."

Ivan showed the place. There were

patches of snow still lying on the ground here and there. Across one of these there was a track of large paws. Johnnie stood and gazed down at them.

"Good Lord!" he presently ejaculated aloud: "It is certainly a wolf, and a huge one; a giant among wolves; he must be twice the size of an ordinary beast!"

Ivan stood and muttered his prayers. The Russian peasant is always very devout in moments of terror; I do not blame him for this; but it would be better, one would think, if he distributed his piety more evenly over the daily round; there are moments when he is far from pious.

At this crisis Ivan was very frightened, therefore very devout. He stood and trembled.

"It would be best, perhaps," he said, "if the priest were sent for from the church-village to exorcise this fiend. If he were to make a *krestny Hod* (a procession with *ikons*) around this part of the forest, doubtless the accursed beast would fear to remain and would go elsewhere—"

"That would be both cowardly and selfish," said Baxter, "and very idiotic besides. I want this wolf, Ivan, and mean to have it. Are you man enough to help me? If not, I will ask Spiridon, and if he is a coward too I will manage alone. Come, now, will you play the man or be a cowardly fool?"

Ivan crossed himself. "What does the English lord wish me to do?" he asked. Poor Ivan was trying to be brave, but supernatural terrors had got a firm hold upon him.

"I am going to pass to-morrow night in the forest, close to the sheep's offal, which he is sure to visit; I shall lie in wait on the ground, not in the tree this time, but well concealed. You shall have a gun as well as I, and you shall load it as full as it will hold with old what's-her-name's doctored bullets. You shall howl like a wolf—none can

"Beat you at howling, we all know that; haven't I often heard you get an answer from some prowling beast when no one supposed there was a wolf within ten miles? Come, now, what say you?"

Ivan's sporting ardor began to work. So did his pride in his profession. He was pleased to be reminded by Baxter of his pre-eminence in the art of imitating animal calls, in which art he was indeed a very master. He began to take heart of grace.

"We would get Katerina," he said, "to say the charm over another batch of bullets, so that we might each have a full charge of them."

"By all means," said Baxter, "she shall curse a score of them for us."

"And I will bring my *ikon*," continued Ivan. "It shall hang upon a tree near us—"

Ivan's unconscious mixture of paganism and superstitious Christianity was very refreshing and delightful; Baxter revelled in it. The Church, in rural Russia, has as yet failed to eradicate wholly from the minds of the peasants the lingering relics of their old pagan faith. In many villages the wise woman is still a power, and in times of cholera or of visitation by were-wolves or other supernatural beings, somewhat widely believed in by a population dwelling in or near the forest, she is as often invited to apply her pagan remedies as is the priest to exercise those functions which the Church has substituted for the rites of the wise woman, sometimes in imitation of the same.

"Yes," said Baxter, "we will take every precaution; you shall make your own arrangements, Ivan."

The keeper did so. He took a handful of slugs to old Katerina and had them well cursed and charmed. They were to carry festering sores and an agonizing death to the accursed beast into whose carcase they were to be

driven by the gun of the English lord.

When the time came to sally forth into the forest Ivan looked haggard and ill, and Baxter was obliged to have recourse to a dose of English whiskey. This did wonders, and the keeper marched into the forest with the air of one who believes he goes to his death but is ready and willing to die because he is noble, and the kind of man from whom such self-sacrifice is expected as a matter of course. He hung his *ikon* upon a tree and sat as close to it as possible.

Baxter loaded both guns with cartridges in whose contents the "doctored" bullets or slugs played a large part. Both men reclined at ease behind a thick bush, within ten yards of the decoy; the guns lay to hand; Ivan had finished his muttered prayers and had cleared his throat for action.

"Now then, begin!" said Baxter.

Ivan began, and suddenly the forest rang with that weirdest, dismalest, most depressing, if not terrifying, of all sounds—the howling of a hungry wolf.

The cries rose and fell in their melancholy cadence, now loud, now soft; here a moment of utter silence, there a gradual crescendo, until the whole forest seemed to resound with the anguished yells of the starving beast represented so ably by Ivan the keeper.

For a while there was no reply, and Baxter began to wonder whether there could really be anything in the theory of a supernatural were-wolf. Surely any real wolf would be taken in by this most realistic appeal to his feelings of comradeship!

Then suddenly there came a reply, and at the first sound of it poor Ivan showed signs of collapse and for a little while was quite unable to continue his vocal efforts. He trembled and crossed himself and gazed blankly into the darkness, first towards the *ikon*,

then towards the place whence the answering wolf-call seemed to come.

The answer was a loud one; a strident, self-confident—nay, arrogant—tone; a cry without modulation or conciliation; a howl that had none of the softness of good comradeship in it; something of a defiant if not actually a threatening accent, Baxter thought, was to be distinguished in the voice.

"That is the cry of a devil-wolf," whispered Ivan; "I dare not answer it."

"Try," said Baxter; his own throat felt wonderfully dry. Was he too falling under the spell of supernatural terror?

Ivan tried, but no sound would come. Baxter bethought him of his flask, the English sportsman's refuge in the time of trouble. Both men sipped courage from its mouth. Ivan tried his voice again, and succeeded. He howled back a cry instinct with good fellowship and conciliation.

"Come along," he seemed to say, "there is food here—plenty for two, if you aren't too big."

"I am big, very big," came the answer, or words that seemed to carry this meaning. "There is never enough for two if I am one of them. Touch it before I come, if you dare!" A loud, rudely-toned, defiant, ill-bred voice it was; just such as a huge, over-grown wolf, knowing his own strength, and—like all wolves—a bully by nature, would employ.

Ivan really showed great courage; possibly it was of the Dutch variety, superinduced by English whiskey; but there it was. He gave soft answers, designed to turn away wrath. He howled strictly to time, waiting—according to lupine etiquette for the reply, and then howling again. The were-wolf came nearer and nearer; one could make sure of this by his voice, which was louder and more ter-

rible at each recurrence. Ivan trembled from head to foot, but stuck to his guns. Between his howlings he crossed himself and muttered prayers. Even Baxter was agitated.

Suddenly the Englishman half raised his rifle—it was still quite dark and he could see little or nothing—and pulled the trigger. Ivan yelled with terror.

A great dusky form loomed before his eyes; he too fired; it howled or roared, and seemed to advance—Baxter fired again.

Then there was a snarling and a snapping of teeth, and a great scuffling and rending of twigs and kicking up of snow and pine needles. Baxter quickly rammed another pair of cartridges into his gun; Ivan was on his knees crying and crossing himself, Baxter swept him off them, out of his way; he fired twice more—

"Light the lantern, fool, and stop blubbering," cried angry Johnnie a moment later; "he is certainly badly wounded, we must follow him up and find him."

Ivan obeyed, trembling. "It is useless," he said, "we only go to our ruin—let him be, my lord, and let us thank Heaven that we have escaped." Baxter snatched the lantern from his hand and plunged into the forest. There was blood here and there, and the snow close by had been much kicked about and trodden; but the wolf had gone.

Baxter followed for half a mile, but a gust of wind blew his lantern out, and he found his way back with difficulty and, be it admitted, not without trepidation. He found Ivan hugging his *ikon*. The keeper uttered a sigh of relief.

"It is better to leave the Evil One alone," was all he said. What Baxter replied is not recorded. He had had the worst of luck, but he still hoped that by daylight he would be able to track his quarry down. He would do

so if he had to ride a hundred leagues—he swore it.

But he was still at breakfast when an extraordinary thing happened. A man or a ghost suddenly appeared, inquiring for the English lord.

This was no other than the herdsman Timothy Harkof; the very man who, according to Ivan, had been slain by the Liéshui, or wood-demons, for conduct reflecting upon their honor, and his soul sent to inhabit the body of a wolf.

Not only did Timothy appear alive and in excellent health, but he brought with him the corpse of the were-wolf, which he had found in the forest and lifted with difficulty into his cart. Ivan introduced the little man into Baxter's presence. Ivan's attitude was solemn and mysterious, but his solemnity was chastened by the spirit of obvious relief and triumph.

"Timothy is not, of course, conscious of the fact," he explained: "but it is certain that when the English lord shot the wolf, using the bullets of the wise woman, he released the soul of Timothy from the bondage of the wolf's body and restored it to its own."

Timothy, it appeared, doubtless for reasons of his own, was pleased to adopt this theory. He could not, he declared, recollect much of what had happened between the night of his defiant exploit of dancing in the holy place of the Liéshui and this morning.

"I think I slept," he said, "and suddenly I found myself driving homewards through the forest."

Baxter invited Timothy to remain behind when he despatched Ivan and Spiridon from the breakfast room.

"Now, my friend," he said; "the truth, please."

"I have told it to the English lord," said Timothy, paling.

Temple Bar.

"Tell it again then, with corrections; there is a police department in St. Petersburg; come, where have you been?"

"Staying with my aunt at Ruchee," faltered Timothy.

"And why this posing as one restored from the bondage of the wood-demon? What have you gained by it? Why could you not have returned earlier to prove the tale a lie?"

Timothy remained silent.

"I have heard of your exploits, my friend," said Baxter; "you are a rogue, Timothy, but you have done it very well; you may keep Katerina's book of charms; but Peter Abranof's packet of money, and Gregory Panof's light cart, must be restored. What about the sheep and lambs—did you or the wolf have them?"

"It was I, my lord," blubbered Timothy, falling on his knees and crossing himself, "but they are eaten long since."

"Well, see that the money and the cart find their way back; that's all. Stay, what made you think of this trickery?"

"I thought of it when I heard that a big wolf was about, my lord; I heard also that I was believed to be dead, killed by the wood-demons—"

"I see," said Baxter. Then he gave Timothy a drink, which was foolish, and a tip, which was quite wrong; he was wicked enough to admire Timothy, and was thinking more of his ability than of his rascality.

As for Ivan, his reputation among the villagers is now unrivalled. Both he and the wise woman suffer somewhat from swelled head, and the old woman drives a large trade. She curses bullets for a district as wide as England.

Fred Whishaw.

SCENERY IN FICTION.

The late Mr. Francis Turner Palgrave wrote a book on Landscape in Poetry; we do not know that anyone has written a book on Landscape in Fiction. Yet this subject might repay close study. Any observations we can make must be of a desultory sort, and at once we will name the provocation we have received to launch our thoughts at all. It is that Mr. Eden Phillpotts has dared to open his fine novel, *The River*, with four pages of undiluted landscape, of unassuaged scenery. Scenery in fiction may well seem a subject for thought when the first chapter of a novel conducts you through 1,300 words of nature-painting to a rabbit-snarer sitting in the bracken.

Many novels, perhaps most novels, open with scenery or weather. Yet in spite of usage, in spite of illustrious example, we cannot rid ourselves of the idea that scenery and weather are a weak beginning. They make an easy and gliding beginning, no doubt: the harbor before the sea. In Mr. Phillpotts' case it is Southampton Water before the Channel. Yet we have never steamed down that magnificent waterway without an impatience to hear the first fist-blows of the sea on the ship's side. Yonder, not here, the voyage begins.

Mr. Phillpotts thinks otherwise. He leans all his weight on scenery at once. His first sentence is this:—

From the rapt loneliness of her cradle, from her secret fountains, where the red sundew glimmers and cotton grasses wave unseen, Dart comes wandering southward with a song.

Anyone who knows anything about writing must perceive that this sen-

tence was written with emotion. It has that lilt which is the evasion of tears, and that vagueness of utterance which unlocks a fateful door. One respects such sentences; one respects, too, such impassioned description as follows this one. Still our inclination is to smile. A great deal is being done for us, but we are perversely willing to wait. "A mother of old story with haunted pools . . . to-day she glides in sleepy backwaters . . . to-morrow she leaps and thunders cherry-red . . . to-day the sub-aqueous mosses gasp as her receding stream leaves them shrunken under full blaze of light; to-morrow she foams in feshet, tosses her wild locks on high, shouts hoarsely, with echoing reverberations in deep gorges and old secret caves, drowns half a fathom deep the little flower that has budded and bloomed with trust beside her brink." We know that all this is impassioned and beautiful (a little obviously, perhaps); but the House of Commons would not stand a dozen words of it, and though literature is not the House, nor we the Speaker, the gulf of difference seems scarcely bridged. True, Mr. Phillpotts tells us that at a certain point "humanity grows concerned with Dart" and "pollutes her current with drosses and accretions from cauldron or vat," but these things are said in order that we may ignore humanity. The very diction obscures Man. We are in Eden before Adam, who, when he comes (on the fifth page) seems an intruder, or rather a red-haired accident.

Of course Mr. Phillpotts has his case: *The River* is concerned with people who live with nature and whose lives may be said, by a convenient rhetoric, to be "concerned with Dart" and with "the granite aprons of her thousand falls."

Actually, however, the print apron of one cottage girl, to say nothing of her possible fall, is more important to Mr. Phillpotts as a novelist, is more important to any novelist, than the wildest heave of boulder-strewn moor or forest. Is it not a mistake, even in a novel of this class, to entitle the story by its setting and to introduce that setting with the utmost power and volume of words? Does scenery of any kind really qualify human nature? It gives it complexion, and certain habits of mind and speech; but we discover even these limited effects only when we meet the people. We are not interested in such effects until the people interest us. The environment is important only as bringing out human nature in little unaccustomed ways.

The error of putting Nature before Man is rarely, however, palpable and complete in any one writer or story. It is certainly not so in *The River*. It came near being palpable and complete in Mr. Hardy's novel, *The Well-Beloved*. It will be remembered that Mr. Hardy insisted in his preface that the remoteness and natural gloom of the Isle of Slingers were "apt to generate a type of personage like the character imperfectly sketched in these pages." But when that amazing character was challenged and Mr. Hardy was driven to explanation, he referred it not to the climate and scenery of the Isle of Slingers, but to the fact that the story was planned and partly written in his less mature period, when his reading of human nature was adventurous. The truth is, of course, that human nature is everything in a novel and scenery *qua* scenery nothing. At the best it is as the setting to the jewel, and at the worst it is as the cackle to the 'osses.

No,—a third and more excellent way there is, the way of drama, the way of truth. A novelist should see landscape through the eyes of his characters. He

should see it when they see it, and be blind to it when they are blind to it; and always introduce it as a part of the drama, never as an interlude. This may be a counsel of perfection, but in our opinion the success of even the shortest description of scenery in a novel depends upon our ability to see it through the eyes and mood of a character in the story, and in no wise on our ability to see it vividly through the author's eyes. In most novels when the author introduces scenery he is resting on his oars. The fact that a character walks from a place called A. to a place called B. is not in itself sufficient reason for describing the scenery between A. and B. Yet it is constantly done. Take the following very innocent passage from *The River*:—

She went to a pastrycook's, where a friend served in the shop, made a meal of the things she liked, drank a glass of milk, and then started very happily upon her journey of twelve miles. She pursued the beautiful road now slowly unfolding pageants of spring. She crossed Holme Bridge, where Dart, silent and mysterious, passed through rocky channels; she climbed the great hill beyond; sank down again to New Bridge; presently descended a tremendous declivity that led to Dartmeet; and saw beneath her the sister rivers mingle. Their shining confluence was set in leaf-buds, in the alder's catkins and the gold and silver flowerlight of the willows. Half way up another hill Hannah heard a man's step behind her, and the next moment someone reached her side and slowed his progress. Then a familiar voice greeted her, as though no great matter stood between them; and she looked up and saw Timothy Oldrieve returning from his sport. "Congratulate me," he said.

This is a fair specimen of the ordinary landscape art of the ordinary novel. Elsewhere in *The River* it would be easy to find higher work; but here we have landscape for mere landscape's sake. It is Mr. Phillpotts who sees it,

not Hannah. It is not related to the girl. It would have been the same for you or us. Now, note with what skill Mr. Meredith, by a single touch, makes a scene personal to the character for whom he has already reserved our attention:—

Nevill Beauchamp dozed for an hour. He was awakened by light on his eyelids, and starting up beheld the many pinnacles of grey and red rocks and shadowy high and white regions at the head of the gulf waiting for the sun; and the sun struck them. One by one they came out crimson flame, till the vivid host appeared to have stepped forward. The shadows on the snow-fields deepened to purple below an irradiation of rose and pink and dazzling silver. There of all the world you might imagine the Gods to sit. A crowd of mountains endless in range, erect, or flowing, shattered and arid, or leaning in smooth lustre, hangs over the gulf. The mountains are sovereign Alps, and the sea is beneath them. The whole gigantic body keeps the sea, as with a hand, to right and left.

Nevill's personal rapture craved for Renée with the second long breath he drew. . . .

It is not the splendor of the description that matters here, it is its dramatic attribution to the eyes and heart of Nevill. "He was awakened by light on his eyelids." In a moment we understand. So have we all awakened many times since childhood, and straightway we share the gradualness and wonder of Nevill, waking to the waking day. We obtain all the sensuous beauty of scenery, and yet we are wholly with Nevill; our attention remains the same in kind; we are not delayed, we progress. Even more apposite is the following:—

They had to wait for tide as well as breeze, and pilot through intricate mud-channels before they could see the outside of the Lido, and meanwhile the sun lay like a golden altar-platter on

mud-banks made bare by the ebb, and curled in drowsy yellow links along the currents.

A superb piece of dramatic landscape is this of Mr. Hardy's:—

Among the graves moved the form of a man clothed in a white sheet, which the wind blew and flapped sadly every now and then. Near him moved six men bearing a long box and two or three persons in black followed. The coffin, with its twelve legs, crawled across the isle, while around and beneath it the flashing lights from the sea and the school of mackerel were reflected; a fishing-boat, far out in the Channel, being momentarily discernible under the coffin also. The procession wandered round to a particular corner, and halted, and paused there a long while in the wind, the sea behind them, the surplice of the priest still blowing. Jocelyn stood with his hat off; he was present, though he was a quarter of a mile off; and he seemed to hear the words that were being said, though nothing but the wind was audible.

Here the entirely personal character of the vision is felt long before Jocelyn is mentioned; it is felt in that note of the fishing-smack sailing under the coffin. It is to this plane that novelists should endeavor to rise in their treatment of scenery. But it is the highest plane, and is therefore scarcely to be reached. They will do much if on a lower plane they guard against writing landscape for landscape's sake. It has been told in Gath and mentioned in the *New York Bookman* that Mr. Phillpotts never describes scenery without sitting down in front of it like a painter, and transferring it bit by bit to his canvas—we mean his pocket-book. The method surprises by itself, but we do not quarrel with it; an author may work as he pleases. We are convinced, however, that Mr. Phillpotts finds his camp-stool too comfortable, and that it would be a kindness now and then to knock it from under him. Of course a

landscape-novelist like Black has his reward, but Mr. Phillpotts is hardly the man to covet that. He knows so much of human nature that one would have him see landscape as a part of it, and as a small part of it. In *The River* are passages in which he reaches a

The Academy.

noble level of art. Indeed, the landscape with which the story begins is artistically redeemed by the landscape on which it ends. The one is premature and subjective, the other dramatic and punctual.

FINGER-PRINTS AS DETECTIVES.

The part which science often plays in the detection of crime is a comparatively unimportant, but to many people a peculiarly interesting, chapter of its beneficial story. There is something of the Sherlock Holmes in the composition of the average man,—hence one may deduce the remarkable popularity of Sir A. Conan Doyle's ingenious creation. In the trial of a burglar at the Central Criminal Court last Saturday a part which has no precedent in our Court was played by one of the finger-prints which Mr. Francis Galton has done so much to expound to the English student. The burglar in question had made his entry through a window the sill of which happened to have been freshly painted. In doing so he was unlucky enough to leave "a particularly plain imprint of his left thumb" on the soft paint. This led to his detection, and the sentence of seven years' penal servitude which the Common Sergeant passed upon him last week. To most people it will not be very clear how this could follow. One thumb, they will say, is very like another; and how can it be said with such certainty that a particular imprint, however clear, belonged to Henry Jackson rather than to John Smith? But the truth is that there is no physical characteristic by which a man can be more easily and certainly identified than the print of his thumb. If the

reader looks closely at the ball of his thumb, or any of his fingers—wherein a small magnifying glass will be of great assistance—he will see that it is covered with a network of fine lines, arranged in a more or less distinct pattern of arches or loops or whorls. These minute marks are quite distinct from the lines to which the palmist attaches such importance, and though less obvious, they are far better worth study. The lines of cheiromancy, indeed, are the result of use, and indicate the creases into which the skin naturally folds itself when the hands are closed. But the less conspicuous markings, or "papillary ridges," originate at a much earlier period in the history of the individual, being essential features of the skin itself. They are probably formed by lateral pressure in the skin of the unborn infant: their mode of production is thus analogous to that which produces mountain-ranges, as the geologists tell us, by the crumpling which secular shrinkage causes in the earth's crust,—or, to take a more homely illustration, to the wrinkles which show themselves on the surface of the cooling porridge. It is possible that these ridges are connected in some obscure way with our sense of touch, and that we owe to them the power of distinguishing between the various textures of the objects which we handle. What is more important, from the

point of view of those who study crime and its prevention, is that the ridges in question afford a trustworthy means of distinguishing between human beings. They form patterns, as Mr. Galton has pointed out in his brilliant continuation of the work originated by Purkenje eighty years ago, "considerable in size, and of a curious variety of shape, whose boundaries can be firmly outlined, and which are little worlds in themselves. They have the unique merit of retaining all their peculiarities unchanged throughout life, and afford in consequence an incomparably surer criterion of identity than any other bodily feature."

It may seem at the first glance that the apparently simple markings on the thumb cannot possibly afford such a criterion. Among a number of men the same markings will surely be repeated, so that no reliance can be placed on their evidence. But experience and theory alike show that this is not the case. A great many thousands of thumb-prints made in permanent ink on convenient cards for reference have been examined, and no two alike have yet been discovered. By a calculation which depends on the mathematical laws of probability, and has been purposely "watered down" so far as to be certainly on the safe side, Mr. Galton has shown that there are at least sixty-four thousand million varieties in the arrangement of these lines, any one of which is as likely to occur as any other; in other words, if we assume the number of the human race to be sixteen hundred millions, the chance of any two right or left thumbs presenting the same marks is one in forty. If we take impressions of all ten digits, the chance that two men will be found with the same sets of marks is but one in the tenth power of forty, which is as near a certainty that no two such men will be found as human intelligence can desire. Most juries will con-

vict on less cogent evidence than that. It will be evident that the systematic study of finger-prints is a most valuable aid to the anthropometrist, who busies himself with the methods of identifying men chiefly in order that habitual criminals may be detected with ease and certainty. Mr. Galton maintains that the system to which he has done so much to call attention is superior in ease of application and sureness of results to the well-known Bertillon system, which is now in operation in most civilized countries, in spite of the deserved discredit which its inventor drew upon himself when in the Dreyfus case he ventured beyond his own special ground. If a record is made of a criminal's finger-prints when he is first sent to prison, he can always be identified in his next appearance. Even if he submits to the painful process of destroying his skin with fire or acids, the same tell-tale marks emerge once more when the new skin grows. It is easy to classify and index any number of such records, and it is not surprising that the criminologists of most countries are regarding the finger-print method with increasing favor. Since 1894 it has been in regular use by our own authorities, in conjunction with photography and the Bertillon measurements. Of course it is only rarely that finger-prints can actually be used in the detection of crime, and the case already mentioned is the first that one recalls in real life, though a novelist in *Chambers's Journal* and Mark Twain in "Life on the Mississippi" have shown how murderers might be convicted by the evidence of their blood-stained finger-marks on a damning document.

In both East and West, in ancient and modern times, indeed, finger-prints have been put to practical use. India and China furnish many instances in which the signature of a deed has been confirmed by the impression of a fin-

ger smeared with Indian ink, though it is doubtful how far this was used in the present sense. It has even been suggested that one of the apparently meaningless forms of our law may be traced to a survival of some forgotten anticipation of Mr. Galton's discoveries. Laying the finger on a wafer as you remark that you deliver a bond as your act and deed possibly alludes to an ancient practice of leaving a finger-print on the document, just as in some savage tribes a mystic value is attributed to the impression of a chief's gory hand on a sacred stone or weapon. The ancient Sovereigns of Japan used to seal State papers with the impression of the Royal hand in vermilion. Bewick, probably acting on his own idea, authenticated some of his books and receipts by an engraved thumb-mark. But the first practical use of thumb-marks as signatures is due to Sir William Herschel, a Bengal Civil servant, who began to use them about 1860 with a view to checking the native taste for forgery and personation. His first idea, borrowed from a native contract on which a thumb-mark was impressed, was to frighten the wily Bengali by attaching a magical significance to the act, but he speedily noticed the value of the finger-prints as a natural signature that could not possibly be forged. In a land where, as Mr. Kipling observes, a complete murder-case can be purchased, including the corpse, for fifty-four rupees, such a check to fraud

was most valuable, and Sir William Herschel's experience has been largely utilized by his successors. In 1896 the Postmaster-General of Bengal decided that post-office orders should in future be authenticated by the impression of the receiver's thumb. A Hindu has a natural genius for forging a signature, but no amount of study has yet enabled him to adopt the markings on another man's fingers. In this country such a system would happily not be worth the trouble that its introduction would cause; but there are large possibilities before the study of finger-prints. The whole Tichborne case, for instance, would have fallen to the ground at the outset if the missing Baronet had taken the precaution of leaving an impression of his thumb with his banker, and the easy method of identification which is thus provided must appeal to all who have found by experience the difficulty of persuading foreign authorities, if trouble arises, that they are really the men named on their passports or letters of credit. Forgery, too, would become a lost art if the finger-print were made a compulsory addition to the signature of wills and other important documents. In that case it would appear that Sydney Smith was really an unconscious prophet when he assured an heraldic inquirer that "the Smiths had no arms, but always sealed their letters with their thumbs."

The Spectator.

THE SCHOOL OF NATURE.

After a generation or more of severe step-mothering the village school has suddenly become, if not the spoilt child of the educational world, at least a small personage about whose welfare all parties are making a prodigious fuss. Of old it had to make the best of a system designed for the great town schools, and when its friends protested they were lectured as either clerical obscurantists or as petty tyrants anxious to perpetuate a system of serfdom and cheap labor. Yet now not only the House of Commons, but if we may believe the nonconformists, the great heart of the people itself is passion-rent over the prospects of paying for those services which the country school has so long rendered gratuitously. Furthermore if we quit politics and come to education, we find that at last the separate existence of the country school is being recognized and even blessed by boards and codes. We have "Nature Study" Conferences such as that held in Yorkshire on Saturday last, when Lord Herries and Professor Miall bade teachers turn from the dead and dried specimen to the living animal; we have had a "Nature Study Exhibition" designed to show how a school can be countrified, where dukes and duchesses gathered to approve, and on whose opening platform were to be seen together, for the first time on record, the official chiefs of the English and Scottish Boards of Education! Amid the general chorus of praise and congratulation that followed the Exhibition there has not been wanting the voice of the scoffer; the cynic saw nothing new, only another fashion to pass in its turn; the hard-bitten teacher warned us against more or less fantastic "play" taking the place of work; the idealist was alarmed lest the col-

lection of "things" should displace the study of ideas.

Of course all these defects and more were plentifully visible in the material shown at the Nature Study Exhibition: still there was an aim "if dimly yet indeed revealed" which is worthy of a little consideration. We may dismiss at once the possible usefulness in after life of the information acquired; it is a specious idea, sounding well upon a platform, that every country child ought to know, for instance, the names of the grasses, good and bad, to be met with in the meadows, but if one really faces the question it will be hard to conceive the situation, time, place, and occasion, when such knowledge can be translated into the value of a penny piece. But the habit of mind which may be engendered by looking at the grasses with sufficient accuracy to discriminate between them is on the contrary an asset that may be realized many times over and may color the whole of a man's life. It is still necessary to repeat that the business of a school is not to impart knowledge, only the higher schools and universities ought to be making a beginning at that. Unfortunately in the past we tried to design even our elementary schools on University models, but the idea of the men who are now fighting for the teaching of science in schools of all grades is not to introduce some "useful knowledge" but a method, in particular the method which will save us from the devitalizing effects of civilization. The ordinary town-bred man has in these times but few calls on his resourcefulness, on his handiness, either physical or mental, to meet an emergency; he lives in his appropriate pigeon-hole; to a school with all its work and play carefully mapped out succeeds the

life of a specialist "fiddling at a piston or a valve"; even if his morning train or tram break down he can do nothing himself but must wait until the higher powers resume their normal operation. Beyond falling in love and the abiding desire to "best" his fellows in money-making, the civilized man is never in contact with any elemental facts his whole life long; in time the socialists may even succeed in taking away the outlet for these last workings of the old Adam. The efforts of civilization are all directed towards removing the accidental and violent incursions of what we may term nature, so reducing life more and more to an orderly sequence, with a corresponding loss both of power and of character in the individual. But how is the teaching of science going to supply any corrective to this numbing result of over-organization, for it can hardly be pretended that science possesses more of the primitive than say football, which indeed is lauded by one head master as the "onlie begetter" of that nerve and art of leadership whose loss we are deploing? Well in the first place mere "natural history" can be a great stimulus to the power of applied reasoning; collecting is after all the modern boy's version of hunting, and if it be not too much reduced to system and made the verification of quasi-facts got up from some of the all too numerous handbooks to the country, it can be fruitful of that "knowingness"—observation followed by deduction, rapid adaptation to circumstances and patience in dealing with the vagaries of things themselves—which is the missing element in our education. Long ago Milton classed as education "the helpful experience of hunters, fowlers, and fishermen", but in those days Piscator, Venator, and Auceps might meet at the top of Totnam Hill; now the hawk-moth is the object of desire rather than the hawk, and the trapper's skill can

be only widely exercised on rats and sparrows.

However "Natural History" is after all only glorified play, desirable enough to develop some faculties but not a whole training for a civilized man; the value of real scientific training lies in the way it rubs up the immature mind against the stubbornness of things. Even in elementary physical science there are few experiments which go in the very simple fashion attributed to them, and if the boy be set to work out something for himself, some series of experiments which, as Professor Armstrong insists, will put him in the position of an investigator, he will find that he has to try back and contrive and keep on adjusting the details to the occasion in a fashion that is of the very texture of life itself. And he will learn by degrees two lessons, one of the importance of details, the other of the meaning of measurement. The Englishman is specially prone to "slap dash" methods of doing business; he only wants to get to work instead of thinking first how to begin and what resources he possesses to carry him through the undertaking. Of course it is a fault with peculiar virtues of its own; "thinking too intently on th' event" may result in inaction, but certainly it is not our national tendency to err in that direction and we can well afford to cultivate the reasoning faculties without danger of sickly over our native hue of resolution.

As to the habit of measurement, recent events have been showing us only too clearly how the slipshod prevails in all departments of national life, we all need to assimilate the old professor's appeal "Pray, sir, be definite". A more subtle result of the habit of measurement lies in the attitude it brings towards the things of the mind; when a man has found that exactitude about such simple matters as the length of a yard or the weight of a pound is mere-

ly approximate, and that a reasonably close approximation is only to be attained by care and precaution, he becomes less inclined to be dogmatic about ideas admitting of no measurement at all; "catchwords" of all sorts—"Free Trade", "Liberty", "Nationality"—become less sure foundations to build upon and are judged as they are rather than accepted as inviolable corner-stones for all time.

And as the right kind of "Nature Study" is only a recognition of the fact that field and hedgerow, meadow and garden, provide just the material for one kind of training in scientific

The Saturday Review.

method, herein lies the value of the subject in the elementary school, and the value of the recent exhibition in providing some examples of the true method at work. The boy who leaves school at twelve or thirteen can acquire but little useful knowledge, yet he can be given a way of looking at things which he can carry over to whatever may be his future business, he can be made to feel that reason and not only routine is at the bottom of doing, and that the world of thought or even of books may be made to piece on to the daily business of life.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

The jolly and whimsical humor of "The Ingoldsby Legends" was never presented in a more taking form than in the edition published by John Lane, with nearly a hundred illustrations by Herbert Cole. Mr. Cole has entered fully into the spirit of these mirthful tales; and his illustrations do not merely decorate, they illustrate.

The exceptional opportunities which Mr. Ashton Rollins Willard enjoyed in Italy, in connection with the preparation of his "History of Modern Italian Art," have given him ample material for a book of lighter type, which he names "The Land of the Latins," and in which he describes in a pleasant, gossiping style the theatres, palaces, studios and shops which he knows so much better than the casual tourist can hope to do. The chapter on country-houses is particularly interesting, with its glimpses of lingering feudalism, and the chat on current Italian writers

will be welcome to many readers. The presswork of the volume is noticeably good, and there are a dozen full-page illustrations. Longmans, Green & Co.

The title-poem in Edith M. Thomas's latest volume of verse "The Dancers", tells melodiously an old Saxon legend of a party of young people who, dancing too bolsterously near a church, were stricken by the priest with a curse, by the terms of which they were forced to dance for a twelvemonth. Other legends from various sources are gracefully retold, and with them are included a number of lyrics, some of a classical order, and some of a modern flavor. Miss Thomas has a delicate fancy and no ordinary skill in versification. Richard G. Badger.

First in the projected series of Katharine Prescott Wormeley's translations from Dumas' "Impressions de Voyage" comes "The Speronara," taking its

name from the little coasting craft in which the gay party of traveling companions skirted the northern shores of the Mediterranean, stopping at one port or another as the caprice prompted. All this region is so much more familiar now to readers as well as tourists than it was when the "Impressions" first appeared that Miss Wormeley has omitted most of the descriptive writing, and the result is really a sequence of delightful stories, told in Dumas' inimitable style, with Capri, Syracuse, Messina or Palermo for a background. Little, Brown & Co.

The knack of finding incidents just big enough for short stories which served Stanley Weyman so well in his "Memoirs of a Minister of France"—to many readers still the most entertaining of all his books—appears again in the volume which Longmans, Green & Co. have just published, "In Kings' Byways." Most of these clever stories have Henry of Navarre for their central figure, though three or four belong to a later period, and they reflect the many moods of their versatile hero with a lightness and ease particularly pleasing in these days of severe and strenuous fiction.

Of rare autobiographic interest is the "Life and Letters of H. Taine," which E. P. Dutton & Co. publish. It covers but twenty-four years—his childhood, his education at the Ecole Normale, his failure to pass for the *Philosophy Agrégation*, his work in provincial professorships, hampered by the unfriendly supervision which at last forced his resignation, and his return to Paris for independent study—stopping short thus of the time when the earliest of his publications appeared. But periods of preparation have a significance of their own, and these letters give really fascinating glimpses of the evolution of their writer's thought. By far the larger number are addressed to inti-

mates of the Ecole Normale—the frank outpourings of an ardent, fearless mind on the political and philosophical problems of his day—but these are diversified by light, bantering, affectionate notes to his mother and sisters, which reveal the domestic side of his nature with the same freedom. The translation, by Mrs. R. L. Devonshire, is a very satisfactory one.

A pleasant narrative style, delightful bits of description, dialogue glancing brightly from one to another of the problems of the day, caustic satire of current fads, and a picturesque grouping of striking figures against a New England background—all these are matters of course in Arlo Bates's novels. But his fiction has been weak in that human interest without which the most ingenious plot fails of its purpose. The characters have not been real, and the reader has not really cared what became of them. In this respect "The Diary of a Saint" is decidedly superior to any of its predecessors. Ruth Privet—daughter to the old Judge, and Lady Bountiful for the community—high-spirited and independent, yet keenly sensitive to the niceties of conduct and character,—compels the reader's liking at the very outset, and he follows the passing of her love from one to the other of the two men who come to woo her with a sympathy that becomes absorbing toward the close. The most delicate social problems are bound up with Ruth Privet's personal perplexities, and the writer's treatment of them is at once decorous and searching, although his climax seems an evasion. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

The names of Charles Godfrey Land and John Dyneley Prince as joint authors of the metrical translations from the Algonkin which Funk & Wagnalls publish, guarantee the im-

portance of the collection to the student of folk-lore, but it has qualities, too, which make it of rare attractiveness to the general reader. "Kuloskap the Master," the hero of the epic which gives its title to the volume, is to the Algonkins "Lord of Beasts and Men," and the legends which center in him have a narrative interest which a child might enjoy, while maturer minds will be as much fascinated by the shrewdness and humor which enliven them as by their recurring resemblances to the better-known legends of old-world origin. They have all been collected at first-hand—many of them from among the Passamaquoddy Indians—under conditions which are described in the preface. A glossary adds to the philological value of the book, while the illustrations—original, by F. Berkeley Smith, or traced after Indian designs by Mr. Leland himself—increase both its popular and its scientific interest.

This season's additions to the attractive booklets which T. Y. Crowell & Co. publish in the "Worth While Series" include two volumes in which college presidents address good advice to college students,—President Thwing of Western Reserve indicating briefly what he would do "If I were a College Student," and President Hyde of Bowdoin discussing "The Cardinal Virtues", wisdom, justice, courage, temperance and the rest; two volumes of a more distinctly devotional type by the Rev. J. R. Miller, "In Perfect Peace" and "To-day and To-morrow," the latter of which is prettily illustrated; two stories of religious experience among seamen, under the title "Light Ho, Sir" by Frank T. Bullen; a selection of "Daily Maxims from Amiel's Journal" the editor of which, Orline Gates, has chosen a bit of Amiel's subtle and illuminative philosophy for each day of the year; a sim-

ple and earnest presentation of "Ways of Well Doing" by Humphrey J. Desmond; and Thedor Storm's sad but exquisite story "Immensee" in a translation by Bertha M. Schimmelfennig.

As soon as it was known that Mr. Carnegie had made Mr. John Morley a present of the late Lord Acton's magnificent library, it was anticipated that Mr. Morley would take an early opportunity to pass the noble gift on to some institution which was able properly to house it and to make a wise use of it. Mr. Morley has justified these expectations by making a free gift of the library to the University of Cambridge. In a letter addressed to the Duke of Devonshire, the Chancellor of the University, Mr. Morley admits that for a time he "played with the fancy" of retaining the library for his own use and delectation, but he soon came to the conclusion that such a collection was more fit for a public and undying institution than for an individual. Of the library itself Mr. Morley writes:

The library has none of the treasures that are the glory of Chatsworth. Nor is it one of those noble and miscellaneous accumulations that have been gathered by the chances of time and taste in colleges and other places of old foundation. It was collected by Lord Acton to be the material for a history of Liberty, the emancipation of Conscience from Power, and the gradual substitution of Freedom for Force in the government of men. That guiding object gives to these sixty or seventy thousand volumes a unity that I would fain preserve by placing them where they can be kept intact and in some degree apart.

Of rare interest among books of travel is "The Path to Rome," by Hilaire Belloc, best known to American readers through his striking biographical studies, "Danton," and "Robespierre." Beginning his whimsical "pil-

grimage" at Toul in Lorraine, he disregards the regular routes altogether, and guides himself with map and compass along the straightest path practicable, up the valley of the Moselle, over the Ballon d'Alsace, across Switzerland, and over the Alps onto the Lombard plain, until, just north of Milan, he "finds that he has marched 378 miles, and breaks the last and dearest of his vows to take luxury in the rolling wheels." To the description of experiences in themselves quite out of the common, M. Belloc brings shrewd observation, quick sympathy, a wide knowledge of life and books, facility of allusion, an exuberance of wit, and a style by turns colloquial, epigrammatic and eloquent, but never forced, and never for a moment dull. Writing of meal-times, ritual service, the German temperament, middle-class manners, window architecture, the trend of scientific thought, bridge-building, industrial art, "the Faith," the modern novel, tourists' economies or the Italian lakes, he is equally spontaneous, stimulating, piquant and irresistible. Charming little sketches from his own pencil make his pages more fascinating still. The book is really one of a thousand. Longmans, Green & Co.

Those readers to whom the narrative is always the chief interest in either poetry or prose, will enjoy "Heroines of Poetry," in which Constance Elizabeth Maud, author of "Wagner's Heroes" and "Wagner's Heroines," re-tells the stories of Elaine, Lamia, the Princess, Minnehaha and some half dozen more in a style which they will find simpler than Mallory's, Keats's, Tennyson's or even Longfellow's. No doubt such outlines have their use, especially for young readers, bald and forbidding as they seem to those who love the romances in their original form. Each of them is prefaced by an

ideal full-page portrait of its heroine. John Lane.

The essays, eighteen in all, which are grouped in John Burroughs's "Literary Values" (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) have a different range, as the title indicates, from the papers with which Mr. Burroughs is chiefly associated. We are used to Mr. Burroughs, observing and reporting upon the work of Nature, watching the seasons, spying upon the birds and walking through fields and woods with alert and kindly eyes; but here we have him reflecting upon books, upon poets, philosophers and essayists, upon the whole inner world of thought and feeling, upon literary standards, upon the things which last and the things which pass away in literature. But he is the same charming companion and thoughtful observer in these as in the other fields: and the volume is a welcome addition to the literature of sympathetic and discriminating criticism.

There never was a better book for beguiling young readers to the reading of history than Charles Dickens's "A Child's History of England." With what vivacity it is written, with what abounding spirits, with what shrewdness, and humor and zest. It combines the fascination of a romance with the engaging individuality of a father's familiar talk with his children. This season witnesses the presentation of the book in the most delightful guise, in a stout volume, attractively printed, with gaily decorated covers, and embellished with nearly or quite a hundred illustrations. These are the work of Patten Wilson. Some of them are full-page and some are scattered through the text. Quaint, vigorous and full of character, they are a delight to the eye, and well repay close study. E. P. Dutton & Co.

A TOAST.

THE CIVIL SERVANT—INDIA, AFRICA,
THE COLONIES.

Gentlemen, charge your glasses:
glasses

Flushing with welcome, brim to
brim,

Oft to your heroes have ye drainèd;
Glasses, I ask, ye charge to him,
Who to the end of your Britains bear-
eth

Jewels, the best your Britain weareth—
Order of life,

Rest from strife,

Light where the lights of God are
dim.

Never a word of his great work cometh
Out to the world where the fame-
wind blows;

Never a whisper winged with courage
Into his desert prison goes.

Lonely and worn, in temper tameless,
Recking of nought so his work be
blameless,

Bravely he fares,
Spent with cares;

Linked to a life and death of prose.
Prose, for it is not his to conquer;

Prose, for he hath no crown to gain;
But to a large and larger labor

Following years his life enchain;

Drudgery—dull dead-weight—his bur-
den,

Frailty, early age, his guerdon;

Life alone,

Death unknown,

Grave where few of his land have
lain.

Yet he is this. When your child-
peoples

Swirl to a war, he makes it peace;
When to a thousand thousand cometh
Panic of death, he bids it cease;
Famine and flood and drought he fight-
eth,

Riot and wrong, the least, he righteth;
Fending, holding,

Fostering, moulding

Men of the hordes ye hold in lease.

Honor him, honor him, then, that hear
me;

Honor of yours is in his hands.

Think of him where 'mid change and
tempest,

Hazard and plague, alone, he stands.

Spirit of England, cheer him, guard
him;

Proudly with pride of his work reward
him—

Sentinel, Judge,

Sovereign, drudge,

Sower of right in your broad brown
lands.

L. P.

The Spectator.

IN THE SIERRAS.

The day pours down

Unmingled breathless draughts of Au-
gust heat

Out of the great bowl of the blazing
sky:

It fills the valleys up, and overflows
Across the ridges of the hills.

A stray syllabic tinkle

(Some milking-cow browsing alone—
along the thin dry grass)

Passes unanswered,

And sinks into the silence and the
slumber

Of the untenanted day.

But when the bowl is empty—when
Earth turns her shoulder on the mas-
terful sun—

The hills draw a faint breath, and a
waft comes

Along the valleys—

Comes, quivering up the aromatic
paths,

Heavily sweet with stirring the hot
leaves.

Then the moon's brow breaks slowly
from the pines,

Like an amber cloud but purer;

Earth wonders at her coming; the
dusky hills

Ring to the chirrup of crickets:

Then all is still—the moon

Walking the silent piney ridges,

Overburdened with light.

Richard Askham.



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